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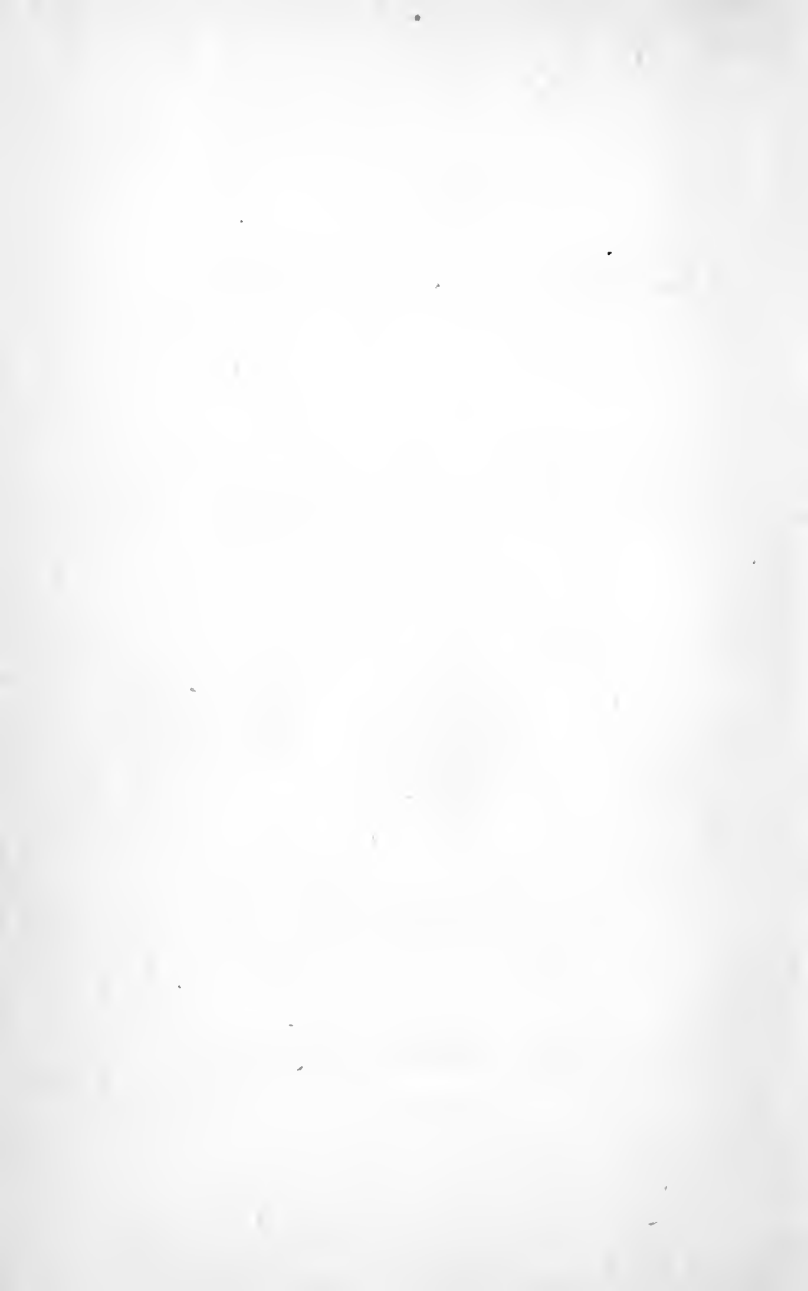
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THE GARDEN OF SEVEN TREES



The Garden of Seven Trees

By

Bennett Weaver

With a Foreword by William Johnston



The Cornhill Publishing Company
Boston

PS 3545
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1921

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DEC 29 1921

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TO MY WIFE

FOREWORD

To mention only four of the short poems in the present volume, one who can achieve pieces as unlike and as successful as *Remembering* ("Is it the scent of the cedar bower?"), *The Candle*, *Gypsy Glen* and *Boughs of May* deserves the name of poet. The first named has rare delicacy of thought, and it combines with this a felicity of meter and a loveliness of half-concealed rhymes which are in perfect harmony with it. *The Candle* is vivid in its picture-forming power. It is the kind of conception in which emotion is made frozen and static through its own intensity. *Gypsy Glen* is a poem of deep and true emotion. It is undoubtedly the voice of the heart, though the other two poems may be the product of the poetic and dramatic imagination. As to *Boughs of May*, there is to me something alluring in its irregular but smooth movement and in its psychology of the mind, unhinged by grief, which speaks of "black-eyed song," which thinks of the stars as "blood-buds," and which tries to forget the tomb beneath the moon in a despairing belief that the loved one is not dead:

"Oh, it's joy to be a-going
And I've worn the pathway true,
Joy, joy to be a-going
Back to you—
An apple bough hung straight
against the moon!"

Foreword

Having named these four pieces as introductory examples of Mr. Weaver's poetic gift, I wish to mention the qualities from which the reader will, I believe, derive the chief pleasure that will be given him by this volume. First in order, though not in importance, I would place Mr. Weaver's intense and individual love of the beautiful.

"a heart whose flame
Was busy round the beauty of the world,"

from his poem *Age*, would well characterize the poet himself.

To some degree we judge the poet by his success in catching those elements of beauty which are common to all true poets; in some degree we judge him by the distinctive and original manner in which he detects, in the world and in the imagination, elements of beauty which other poets have not so clearly seen or reproduced. I find in the work of Mr. Weaver an attractive and original note of imaginative loveliness. I find this in the sea of gold and the sand of silver of the lyric, *Lost*, in its white sail cutting a white moon, and in the flashing suggestiveness of

"One soul to the moon on the waters,
And one, home."

I find it, likewise, in the wistful sweetness of *The Dim Water* and *The Moon Was White*; it flashes upon me from poem after poem. Sometimes it reveals itself in a vision of an idealized or romanticized world, for the flame of this poet's heart is often busy round a world which

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is not of this earth, and I am certain that there are many who can admire the most realistic of the *Chicago* poems of Carl Sandburg, for instance, and can as much admire those of Mr. Weaver's poems which have the background of a romanticized world. I think that Sandburg himself will recognize the high poetic qualities of the latter. He will recognize the validity, for some writers at least, of Mr. Weaver's theory of the two worlds, for from childhood our poet has lived busily and laboriously in the real world and eagerly and intensely in the dream world. He trusts life, but at times he must enter into his closet and shut the door. Then he hears the voices that make no sound. Then he plucks lilies from the sky and flame from the water. It is from this world that he finds much of his finest and most typical poetry, and I think that it is this world which is the object of his best love.

A second characteristic of Mr. Weaver's verse, and that in which I consider it most noteworthy and most deserving of praise, is its high imaginative quality. Sometimes, as in *Under a Rose*, his imagination takes the lighter form of fancy, playing with its fancy rather than gripped by it—

“Living and dying,
My heart and the rose.”

but usually it is imagination in its higher form. Mr. Weaver is successful in the imaginative realization of emotion, and I know of no living poet who surpasses him in that imaginative realization of likeness which springs from emotion and expresses itself in figures of speech:

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“now shadows form, and, dimly great,
Huge-shouldered things press at the hills.”

“The water of the storm is bitter upon the pane;
Night goes against the stars like black acid,

or, more simply,

“The mouldering garth-fence, level to the feet
of the intruder wind.”

“the shadows lie
Hard on the heart I love the best.”

or, of a dead child,

“he left his play
And made no track on his white way to sleep.”

Such visualization of emotion as is found in figures like these, which are taken almost at random, is of the very essence of poetry. For a longer passage I quote from *Marsea*:

“You sat
On a high place, a windy sun
Coronal round you. Over the white
Of your shoulder a bronze-dim harp
Curved its wild throat. Your hand wrought
Gleaming upon the gleaming strings,
Unweaving long tresses of music
Which darted and flashed down the wind.”

It will be worth the reader's while to analyze the complex pictorial suggestiveness and the sweeping figurativeness of the passage.

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The third element of the work of Mr. Weaver to which I would refer is his originality. I say this in spite of my belief that some readers will criticize his poetry on the ground that it seems at times to echo that of other writers. In two pieces one can doubtless detect "faint Tennysonian echoes, nothing worth," and certainly no one will fail to catch some reverberations that are of Belgian origin. There are a few lines reminiscent of Keats, of Poe, of Milton. Unquestionably *Marsea* has affinities with certain other plays, affinities in characters, in setting, in atmosphere, and in mood. Even more perhaps may be said of *The Seekers*, yet I do not hesitate to say that the author of the present volume may fairly be considered a decidedly original poet. He is unlike some of our contemporary poets in that the essence of his originality is too subtle to be caught in the net of a definition, yet it is vital. It is as elusive as personality itself, yet as distinct. It is pervasive rather than concentrated, and it reflects a definitely individual attitude toward life. This attitude has nothing of the journalistic, and it is not mere novelty. It is essentially poetic, and it gives a distinctive and a very attractive quality to the majority of the poems in the volume. It is revealed more by suggestion and by haunting melody than by direct statement. It is involved not only in word and phrase or in picture and image, but in that harmony of the whole which makes a true poem much more than equal to the sum of its parts. Yet I by no means intend to intimate that it is never shown in newness of subject

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matter. And of one thing I am certain: this poet is a sincere and conscientious artist; he will do the thing in the way which he thinks right rather than in the way which others may think new. The originality is not part of a make-up, but part of the man. Consequently, it will more and more reveal itself outwardly and it will not be subject to sudden change.

Though the three qualities which I have named seem to me to be those in which Mr. Weaver shows most distinction, they are supported by many others. The reader will find evidence of a mind logical as well as imaginative, and will discover that this poet's tendency to idealize does not by any means exclude accuracy of observation. He will find some interesting psychology in the poems, one example being *Marsea*. This is a poetical drama which should succeed upon the stage of some of the best of our little theaters. The two characters of the drama proper are equal in loveliness but unequal in strength, and the play is a poetic embodiment of the idea that when two personalities meet, each attempts, consciously or unconsciously, to absorb, to appropriate, to consume the other. The rapture of such absorption, the beauty of it, the recognition by the weaker of the fearful danger of it, are the motive of the poem—

“Beauty

Is blood . . .

. . . It was you who taught

Me truth and you who taught of beauty,

And you consumed me!”

Foreword

Of Mr. Weaver's success as a narrative poet the present volume affords the reader but one example by which to form an opinion. *Alladine* is from several points of view an interesting poem, one in which many readers will find much to enjoy. I heard the author read it in a certain gusty lane one autumn afternoon, and found it delightful. The owl that sat all night at Alladine's casement

“Snipping the bones of a lesser bird”

seemed very owlish, midnightish and malignant; and the song of the white winds gave a subtly lyrical effect. The idea of a girl whose pride in her voice led to the plan for robbing all the nightingales of the tips of their tongues impressed me as a good point of departure for building up the simple but sufficient plot of the poem. Naturally, the Earl's daughter must suffer for her selfishness:

“Then Alladine lifts up her eye,
All in the forest at midnight hour,
And the mists like lough-sloughed viper skins
Are coiled round the dead men dancing there.

. . .

‘And ye must sing,’ the whisper wails,
‘Sing to the forest made dumb for thee.’ ”

When she sings, then

“Down sink the tarn-men in the mere;
The coiled mists thin and fail to go;

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And the great owl buffets the night with wings
That are full of flight and windy fear;
And the moon sweeps up, and the nightingales
Burst from the bough in chorus full.”

Of *The Garden of Seven Trees* as representative of Mr. Weaver's thought about human life and destiny much could be said. Likewise, could much be said of the plan and the setting of this philosophic drama and of its value as showing what power the author possesses as a creative artist. I think that it may find fewer admirers than many of the other poems, but that the admiration of some readers will be sincere and deep. The poem has served to deepen in me the general impression which a reading of all of the poems of the volume has made. That impression is this: Mr. Weaver is a true poet. He comes offering a genuine gift of imaginative beauty. Though his poetry may not make an impression of extreme novelty, it is original and distinctive. His work will be a source of keen enjoyment to all who are alive to the most characteristic sources of poetic pleasure, and from some of the poems the kind of pleasure derived will be found intimately connected with the deepest part of our complex inner life.

WILLIAM JOHNSTON.

Lake McDonald, Montana.
September 10, 1920.

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THE GARDEN OF SEVEN TREES



I

LOST

The creep of the gold sea
Up the silver of the sand,
A white sail cutting the white moon,
A cry from land.

The long path over the moor,
A pale path away from the foam,
One soul to the moon on the waters,
And one, home.

TO —

I

I could not think, so loud he sang,
That Silence ever could come here,
Silence and dreadful eating Fear,
Grief with her low remorseful pang.

I could not think, so tenderly
He stooped to whisper unto me,
Of night grown lonely after day,
Of day more black than night alway.

The Garden of Seven Trees

I could not think this life were sweet
And worth the living to the end,
Did I not think our ways should meet,
And he once more would call me friend.

11

The brook crawled blackening to the light,
A black cloud crawled across the star,
The moon hung like a saffron scar
Upon the mad face of the night.

The wind yelled out and beat the tree
Down, down to sob of him to me;
Frost-poisoned grass blades slashed my face
Bent low in one wild prayer for grace,

For grace to love him still the same
Who laughs against another's cheek,
Nor knows no more my house nor name,
Nor the lone ways that I must seek.

VICTIMA

There is no harder thing than this:
To speak of death to one you love;
To hold the hand you soon will miss
While all your years more slowly move;

The Garden of Seven Trees

To say good-bye at evening time
And face the empty night alone,
While stars you've named together climb
Along the slow wind's path of moan;

To lie upon your couch while sleep
Dazzles your sense before its fall;
To hear a calling from the deep,
And from the night to hear a call.

The sunset boat moves out to sea,
The wind fills well and blows away;
But this broad shore is strange to me,
And strange the night and strange the day.

THE DEATH TASK

I said, "This sweet deceiving thing
That we call life, were better done.
All beauty rests her glorious wing
In dust. Beneath the going sun.

Frail, fair things die and good things cease,
Love's tender tumult slowly fails,
And on the shore, apart from peace,
We ever watch the outgoing sails."

The Garden of Seven Trees

But now, to-night, beside the form
That was so beautiful and dear,
A soft voice whispers thru the storm,
And pain is cooled and thought and fear.

The darkness gently falls apart
Across a light and pleasant way;
I know Life's hand upon my heart,
And Death kneels kindly near to pray.

SIXES AND SEVENS

SIX

Ten thousand links of gold and iron and lead
Were quarried from the heart of God by past
Eternities to chain my soul. And men,
Ten thousand thousand, by the forges, dead,
Grey bone by ashen steel, have wrought and cast
My destiny. I am what they were then.

My habits are their tendencies. I live
Their dreams. From seed a million æons sown
I reap a harvest that is not my own.
The graneries of Thebes and Ipsambool
Were empty still when all my life was full,
And life for me has nothing more to give.

The Garden of Seven Trees

I am the host of ages, and my heart
The food of mummied mouths. My being, aye,
My self, my soul, is but the perfumed breath
Of those who live in me beyond their death.
Oh, what is man? And what, indeed, am I?
A hope, a fever, come but to depart!

In Adam all men lived. We all have died
Before our birth. Life came to us as dreams
In death, called, and the echo but replied.
We are but drops in myriad branched streams
That swelled to movement from God's lonely tear;
And ours is but to go, to move, to fear.

Our death is common and our brotherhood
Is deep as life. Your good is still my good.
I share your food, your dress, your shelter, and
Your being. You have nothing private tho
You dig to hide the thing. The grave's in land
We own together. Life is one. You go,

I come, but age and life remain. 'Tis true,
Were all men put in one there yet would be
But one, and he with no more power to see,
To feel, to live than each has now. Go, do
Thy mightiest deed, contend in bravest strife,
You can not mark eternity or life!

The Garden of Seven Trees

Man's pride and glory still must be to wear
His chains like ornaments; to keep, not share
His task; to live with courage; to endure,
Self-mastered, self-sufficient, self-secure.
He who is king of self is thrice crowned king
Of all that the eternities can bring.

SEVEN

I come now to this granite jaw of rock,
Which, beast-like, champs the waves in frothy rage.
Sunk is the sun in sudden dark. No glow
Of light remains. Above the shore-long shock
Of plunging tides, the heavy winds presage
Tumult and doom and night. The sea curves slow

Its back into the sky and lunges full
And furious at the shore. Its white tusks pull
Bases from tottering cliffs and grind and roar
Like thunder chained to some Caucasian hill.
This is the end, the end, and nevermore
Shall I lie down and rest and take my fill.

Sunk are the singing streams. The birds have flown
Thru olden sunsets and the flowers are dead.
The happy heart, the cool, bare flesh upon
The grass, the dreams, the songs, and all I own
As good, they, too, have fainted, feared, and fled.
Fled like fall birds are joys before the dawn

The Garden of Seven Trees

Of the eternal winter in my soul.
Is this the age and wisdom for which I
Have spent my youth and spirit? This the end
Of that flowered path whereon I still did bend
My longing footstep onward? Why, oh, why?
Is not the pathway better than the goal?

Night sweeps her finger o'er the page of life
And blots the whole. The guttered candle flame
She puffs upon—infinite darkness snaps
Across eternity! Youth sucks and laps
At knowledge, age retains, death drops—a name
Upon a stone, and nothing of the strife!

What purpose is in life? Love man, love God?
Increase and multiply? God needs not love,
Man needs not life. Why should an animate clod
Beneath the disc, the harrow, look above
Toward the sun, because some wind-blown seed
Has fallen where life's heart began to bleed?

All paths must end and some end by the sea,
And this my path is ended now for me.
I walked the way, I asked of none to ride,
And now I feel the swelling of the tide.
On this raw rock I gladly lay me down,
My head unbraced, unfettered by a crown.

SILENCE

There was a silence,
As if sleep were stroking a mouldy bell,
As if death were closing his wing in mist,
A great silence,
And it covered all the world.

I could hear the dew
Slipping from the grass blades,
Nestling in the cobwebs of the world.
And in all strange places
There were strange silences:
Silence as of a lark sleeping,
As of lambs thrusting their noses into wool,
As of men making anthems on a peak,
As of God moving His great eyes.

My soul was full of trembling,
Like the beam of a little star,
Smitten with tempest.

TO C. C. W.

If I might sing no more,
Nor nevermore
In morning song voice my full soul,
If but one song I had
Of all songs yet to sing,
I'd spend it with a full heart
Praising you,
Companion of my gentle, nearer hours,
My quiet close to God.

TWO SONNET SONGS

I

The young leaf comes unto the willow tree,
The young lark in the meadow beats her wing;
Low on the circling hills of mystery
There pants the bosom of the maiden Spring.

Fair form, in crocus and aenemone
Woven with golden sun, the dewy hour
Of Morning draws from you her jubilee,
And Evening passions with your master power.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Not so with me that feed on human breath,
And know the Autumn that must freeze along
The human beauty of our blinded life.

You grieve me deeper than the Winter wrong
Which makes a nothing out of all our strife,
And fastens all our little ways in Death.

II

You do me wrong, you little birds, to play,
You do me wrong, you little birds, to sing:
"Your true love sleeps a far and far away;
What message shall we from your true love
bring?"

Ah, what would such as you with burdening love
To weight your little breasts and break your
wing?

For you would fall and perish there above
The thorn wastes, you would perish with the
thing!

Or if you still would serve me, swiftly fly
And build your happiness about her there,
And twitter nothing how my heart would die
Of lonely grief and agonized despair:
Build round her fortress joys in carol sweet,
And lay my sad soul dumbly at her feet.

ASPEN SHADOW

Roses in the shadow,
In the aspen shadow, roses.
Spirit-still the night that closes
Round us, sweet-heart,
Here within the aspen shadow
And among the roses.

Music, music, memory,
In the shadow come to me;
Rose of life, you come to me,
You, my sweet-heart,
Here within the aspen shadow,
Here among the roses.

A SONNET

Even if those quiet eyes turn not the way
My fancy, haunted by the joy of years,
Shall wander; even if those tender ears,
Too pleased with the common things I say,
Heed not the unwavering music of my lay
Clear sung, of faith the silver note, of love
The golden chord; yet shall my soul above
All sorrow, be content to hope and pray.

The Garden of Seven Trees

For song has yet companionship divine
Within itself, and he who in his heart
Has music, has all earth and heaven beside.
Ah, who shall thumb and touch the secret, fine
Estrangement of that dumbly aching part
Of otherwise perfect love, which, longing, died?

OH, LOVELY ONE

Oh, lovely one among the flowers,
I can not sing!
The melancholy hours
Are on my heart;
I perish in the sight of you, most fair.
It is the woe of all the world, beloved,
It is the woe of all the world
That covers me,
And even you, beloved, can not save my soul.

The moon in her high place is bright,
Is bright among her stars;
The night
Is all about me, lovely and serene.
And yet again the dumbness of my heart!
Even that you are near, so utter dumb
With wonder
And the grief, the grief that will not spare my
soul.

I have heard youth in pain,
And old age groan:
I shall not hear again
Your voice, my love,
But I shall think of all the woeful world,
The woe of all the world from youth to age.
You are so beautiful that I must die.
Oh, lovely one,
The melancholy hours are on my heart!

ON THE PIER

I

That evening I huddled in the mist
That clung upon the bosom of the sea;
I felt you come, I knew that we had kist;
But all about the living mystery
Folded me from the shore, and I alone.
Oh, love, from those old deeps what was the groan
That sounded till the waters shook apart,
Revealed the hidden? Love, love, upon my heart
Make me my answer and so let me sleep!
You were so near, so beautiful, — and yet —
What was the hidden thing within the deep?
I ask to know it only, then forget.

II

And I have asked of you the secret, love,
And all your answer is a quiet hand
Laid on my forehead, close, and now above
Myheart. "Ah, you are good," you say. "The land
Woos to the deep, so I to you. I yearn
For you because you yearn for me. Stars burn
For night and suns for day." "And yet," I ask,
"For whom do night and day perform their task?
There is some ultimate." To which you place
Your head upon my shoulder while the night
Goes by and spreads the mist upon your face:
Within the mist we wait, then, for the light.

III

And it shall come mist-shrouded; for I know
That woman's beauty has not told its truth.
"The topless towers of Illium," the ruth
Of nations is not written on the snow
Of any woman's breast. There sweetened milk
Has drawn its trceries of liquid silk
And half disclosed an awful history
Writ in the utter runes of mystery.
"Ponder the plain?" It is not all so plain;
For what I give my life to, I possess,
And it holds me beneath its fine caress,
And out of all come life and death and pain.

A RONDEAU

Ten stars and ten clouds in the sky,
And a moon like the skull of a crone.
Oh, memory kneeling alone,
While the winds and the clouds go by,
While the clouds drift and the winds sigh!

Two castles with turrets on high,
And owls in the turrets to cry,
While the winds moan
And mingle with mists on the stone.
Ten stars in the sky.

Two flowers in the sleep-dusk of dreams, and I
Fearing the gleam of the wings that fly
Thitherward, thitherward all alone.
Two flowers nodding in hands of bone,
Thitherward, thitherward—Let them die!
Ten clouds in the sky!

OUT OF SLEEP—

My love, my dear one is ill!
The winds mewl beneath the window and sicken
and scream;
The water of the storm is bitter upon the pane;
Night goes against the stars like black acid.

The Garden of Seven Trees

My love, my dear one may pass beneath the
 high arch of the morning;
She may go with the stars to their sleep,
With the little white stars to their slumber:
Whiter than these is her soul.
Her hands are thin mist in an orchard at bloom-
 time;
Her finger tips at my cheek are budded anemones
 in feathers of snowdrift;
Upon the pillow her hair is cedar-fire over white
 water:
I fear it will tempt the feet of the angels.
Her eyes sleep;
They are hidden under the curved petals of a
 strange flower;
In her eyes I forgot my soul;
If they do not open,—God and her loveliness!

Night rushes against the stars;
It is bitter against the blown stars of the North.
I hear the shadow of mighty tears at the window,
And the wind reaching.

I must pray against the bitterness of death.

SONNET

No, not tomorrow let the great lamp fail
And love be desolate! Within the hall
Keep Joy, the moth, feeding among the tall
Flowers. Let music, nard-anointed, frail
Courser of the evening quiet light, veil
Memory with sleep that we may dream
This thing still is. And let thy incense stream,
Oh Power, over our couches low and pale.
Warmouths that cling with moaning while they kiss,
Bosom to bosom struggling,—all let be!
Our musky passion lightens but to flee;
Flame leaves dry ashes; Love will turn a-cold.
The world has yet no recompense for this:
That Life is not a thing the hand may hold.

A GRAVEYARD

I stood within the little yard—
A hundred years had flown—
And stranger names about me rose
On many a mouldering stone.

Here lay an infant and the one
Who gave the infant birth,
A hundred years, a hundred years
Clasped in the common earth!

The Garden of Seven Trees

And here lay one whose years were sweet,—
A mute line told her tale;
A hundred years, a hundred years
She slept within this vale.

Oh, that a maiden here should lie!
Her bosom was like snow,
Her eye was bright and sunny blue
A hundred years ago.

I wept to hear the spring-time thrush
Sing in the hollow glen;
I wept to think of youth, how sweet,
How frail, even now as then!

For one who had been near my heart
Had drawn toward the grave
And love had known its bitterest grief:
It had no power to save!

The stones rose slanting in the sun,—
How ancient was their woe!
The thrush sang gayly in the glen,
I turned my steps to go.

I sought her, frail and lingering sweet
Against my bleeding heart,—
My love, my bride, my holy one!
Her eyelids drew apart,

The Garden of Seven Trees

I kissed the dim light of her eyes,
I kissed, and knew the pang
Another felt a century gone,
While wild glen thrushes sang.

A century gone! An hundred years
And what shall my grief be?
A wild thrush singing in a glen,
Upon a ghostly tree!

GYPSY GLEN

I

I left her standing at her door, and turned
Away toward the hills. Yet was the sweet
And awful vision of her face upon me;
The too frail light of innocent agony
Shone still between her laden lashes; and
Her mouth was open like an angel's which
Has wept a great cry thru eternity.
Her hand lay flashing on her forehead pale,
The delicate fingers scarce a-grip of life
Mingling among the morning of her hair:
Oh God, that life should leave the beautiful!
Against the spread base of a somber hill
Lay the low graves of some ancient in death;

The Garden of Seven Trees

A not unlovely place, and there I paused
Beside that city where a century
Had woven webs of old and human dream,
Which silently had worn themselves away.
The mouldering garth-fence, level to the feet
Of the intruder wind, invited me
By its own helplessness to enter there
Where the grey stones rose slanting to the sun,
Or lay, themselves with their sad message, lost
Among the weedy moulds of many years.
My foot was on the bed of stranger dust;
But not without an agony I looked
Along the desolations of the place,
And strove to read the testaments of love
Graven on time and by time's self destroyed.
Here most imperial maidenhood had come,
A flower upon her bosom, and to sleep!
And here sweet infancy lay in the breast
Of doubly-mothering earth; and here at last
Stout manhood's passion drew about itself
The silver of its age, and slept. Within
The distant glen a wild spring thrush poured out,
Most like the rills of paradise, his song;
And far he sat upon the ghostly tree,
And poured his hermit music down the glen.
With something of the duskiness of spring
The mighty depths of valley drifted slow
Among the hills, hills which with fallen trees
Snow-covered, lay like battle-ruined gods

The Garden of Seven Trees

Half skeleton beneath the sky. I went
Under the ghostly tree and turned to look
Where the long Ohio tugs among her mists;
And turning yet again, like fire I saw
The glen-rill near and fretting with the sun,
Gleaming and glancing. Then upon my heart,
Swifter than maiden's laughter and more soft
Than her fellow-foot upon a path of dream,
There swept the memories of that time when you,
Frail holy one, went with me here among
The flowers of long-gone summer days.

I turned

A heavy eye upon those objects loved
Under your notice—what a change was there!
All the raw outlines hewn by winter wind,
Bare tree, bare stone, bare earth, and barren sky!
The root that split the rock and in its coil
Held one slight maiden fern with violets near,
Stretched thru a frozen convulsion of serpent
wrath,

Like some earth agony made evident
Out of the deeps of earth. And here where
grew

The fairy maple with her red cap on,
A slight child naid leaping up the dell,
The oak, with his death whisper of dead leaves,
Stood like a sacristan so iron old
That my soul chilled as with immediate ice.
Too heavy were the memories of the place,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Weighting the heart and making weary all
The dumb pulse of my bosom: to breathe was
grief.

Cold agony its dripping poison sent
Like frosty hemlock creeping thru my veins,
Slow, dreadful, holding still from absolute dark:
A horror! Stumbling thru the wind, I ran,
Daring not to turn back and leave the glen,
Nor to go forward where my holy one
Might go no longer.—The thrush his hermit song,
—A swift path up the valley's heaving side,
Upward, and misery, now keen. My foot
Here touched a winter fern, and here a burr
Of sodden chestnut; and the waters fell
Further beneath me, and the distances
Grew white and awful till the mighty glen
Lay swept with infinite pale light a-surge.
Then on the valley's topmost ramp I stood,
Like some mad Moldav slave, and looked below
Where gleaming and glancing the glen rill fretted
the sun,

Its voice now like so many airy bells
Blown thru an evening twilight. There I sat.
"Myself am a young slave, hauling an oar
Within a galleon of black dreams. My fault,
A soul impelled by visions, and my wrong,
A heart wrapped with the silent cerements of
An inarticulate ancestry. For these
The gall chains and the oars of bitter woe!"

The Garden of Seven Trees

Oh, holy one and frail and fair, I sat
Alone with my slave miseries! Below
I seemed to see you walking in the white
Of beauty, and your hair lay on the wind
Like flame. A moment and the flowers rushed
Bowering your gleaming feet, and your fair hand
Was living in the flowers, your eyes aglow
With violets and roses. I could see
Your shell-like nostrils widen at the breath
Of lilies, and the lily pulse along
Your throat. But this was vision all. I wept.
The grey hills lay beneath me, altars old
Of ancient Maenad tempest. There was left
Bare tree, bare rock, bare earth, and barren sky,
And these alone and only these. I wept.
A cenotaph was all the earth and heaven,
And my heart was a little empty tomb,
And I the bearer of that fearful ark!
Oh God, that life should leave the beautiful!
The odor of her body was rich fruit!—
And far the glen-thrush sang and poured his song
Down the long glen.—The odor of her body
Was a rich fruit of utter paradise!

EIGHTY DAYS

“For eighty days I’ll trade with you,”
Said Death, “for all you hold
Lovely.” I sealed the trade. The blue
Of all the sky ran gold.

I took my bowl of blackened mead,
Gulped it, saw hell, felt flame;
And all that earth, hating my greed
Of Beauty, willed, then came.

Death put a vision in my hair,
Hung it before my eyes;
Oh, it was pale and ghastly fair!
Its mouth was white with cries.

This bent my head, hurt, crazed my brain;
And, lo! for eighty days
It shrilled the fearsome chants of pain
And whinneyed demon lays.

I paced the promontories dark
As bulls’ horns in the sea,
And fevered waves with snarl and spark
Flung up their spears at me.

The Garden of Seven Trees

I crept thru island canyons deep
With wail and bitter night;
But never waking or asleep
Could lose that awful sight;

Till slow where writhing lava rings
The mountain like a snake,
I heard the earth-heart where it sings,
And felt my own heart break.

“’Tis done,” cried Death. “I’ve wrought
my deed!”
“And wrought God’s will,” cried I,
“For you who taught my heart to bleed
Have taught it how to die.”

“Lo, at the last you’ve wrought me fair
A diadem of flame,
And love has followed hidden where
My bleeding wild-foot came.”

“Upon my sleep she gently waits,
And all that was is good.
I go beyond the barless gates
To Beauty’s brotherhood.”

SONNET

Come, now your nightshade and your roses
twine,
Your lilies and your deadly bough of yew,
Cypress and oleanders, and the blue
Mist violets with heavy moaning pine,
Low sedges sweet and yellow celandine.
Twine these and work out coronal and cross
Against a bed of green and golden moss,
For she is dead, the holy Alladine.

Meet is this loveliness, for lovely she
In her young maidenhood. She taught again
How beauty may fold up its heart in death,
And how life may continue in its pain
From lonely day to night, from breath to breath
Spending itself against eternity.

LO, ANYWHERE!

Last night you lay upon my bed,
Across my heart your living hair;
I marveled at the words you said:
"Lo, anywhere! Lo, anywhere!"

I marveled at your whispering
More light than any swallow's wing,
More sweet than swallows when they sing
And dart into the northern air:

“Lo, anywhere! Lo, anywhere!”

Your breath came dewy at my cheek,
It touched and clung like perfume there,
Sweetened by that which you did speak:

“Lo, anywhere! Lo, anywhere!”

I reached across the counterpane,—
All, all was night and all was vain!
And yet I heard your voice again
As tho it spoke in midnight prayer:

“Lo, anywhere! Lo, anywhere!”

TWO POEMS ON THE SEPARATION

I

I crept like Death into our room
And even like Death I snuffed the light;
My body sobbed within the gloom
My spirit reeled against the night.

The windows moaned upon the sky
Their pale despair of moon and star;
And thru my being shook a cry
That came from far and very far.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Like charnel dew I sought our bed,
I sought our bed like charnel dew:
Oh God, oh God, that you are dead,
And I not dead along with you!

II

Out of the night, a whisper,
Out of the deep and the roll
Of the deep tides, a question
To shatter my soul.

Out of the systems, a blinding
And torture of vision, and lo!
Under immensities clinging,
Moths and chill snow.

Snow flake and flake from the wing tip
Loosened by all-mighty breath,
Down on my pale soul drifting, drifting —
Death!

A MARSH SONG

I

Oh pale green star
Wan with mist,
Oh rose of the marshes,
I keep my tryst!

The Garden of Seven Trees

I go where the dews are ripe,
The grasses tall,
I go where the dews are dark
The curlews call.

II

Never a whisper
Thru the purple vervain,
Under the red marish weed,
No whisper, none.
All is pain, all is pain,
All, all is done;
Under the red marish weed,
Never a whisper.

THOU LOVELY STAR

I

Thou lovely star in the quiet sky,
Give me your peace and let me rest;
The day is gone and the shadows lie
Hard on the heart I loved the best.

We'll go no more to our evening hill—
Happy the days forever gone!
And you, dear heart, in the night, how still
Waiting the dawn, the great white dawn.

The Garden of Seven Trees

The raw wet grave in the dark I see,
You are beneath, that's all I know;
Beneath, forever apart from me.
Star of the night, I go, I go!

II

"I eternally see her figure eternally vanishing."—J. K.

The clouds lie matted on the hill;
Like hair of dead men old in pain
Whistle the strands of winter rain,
And all my heart is cold and still.

Fair shape along the iron night
Taking your way with bleeding feet,
You fade, and all your fading sweet
Burns like a death-star on my sight.

Where black the pouring midnight streams
Or rolls in huge and ocean form,
There sounds the thunder of the storm,
Hell-wild the iron tempest screams.

White demon of the curling blast,
Again, again appear to me,
Tho with your bleeding feet to flee
And tread the horror of the vast!

My demon! Mine, whose angel eye
Is sunken in a violet tear,
Again, again to me appear,
Tho but to vanish and pass by!

Show the white sorrow of your face!
The midnight steeps of terror break!
The smitten steeps—oh love, forsake
Not yet my awful prayer place!

The coils of tempest round you swing,
Bleeding with death your feet move on;
You shudder thru the awful dawn—
Eternal is your vanishing!

UNDER A ROSE

Under a rose in a garden of bloom
I have buried my heart,
And the winds come touching the spectral gloom
Of the garden rich and fair.
For a rose grew up in the garden of bloom,
And faded, and there
I have buried my heart.
Let not the night touch to the earth her lip
All dark and cold;
For under the earth, down under the mould,—
Ah, the wind knows!—

Even, even as long of old,
In fellowship so sacred and sweet,
In fellowship closer than when hearts meet,
My heart and the rose,
Living and Dying,
My heart and the rose!

AVE VERUM—Mozart

Ave verum—lowly, lowly
Lay her in the tomb;
Ave verum—slowly, slowly,
In her little room
Rest her for her heavy sleeping,
Rest her from her weeping.

Ave verum—lovely, lonely
Fold her in the earth;
Ave verum—she sleeps only,
Quiet from the mirth
Of bells and wind. She wakes again
Quiet from her pain.

Ave verum—ever, ever,
Tho her eye was bright!
Ave verum—never, never,
Waking in the night!

The Garden of Seven Trees

Ave verum, ave verum,—
Toll the heavy sound;
Ave verum—beauty dies,
Ave verum—beauty lies
Low within the ground.

BOUGHS OF MAY

A little luring pathway
Beneath the boughs of May,
And black-eyed song, and black-eyed song—
Away, oh, away!

The path leads thru the shadow,
The path wastes thru the gloom,
The gloom of blossoms perishing
Against the moon.
And all the little stars are out
Like blood-buds on the sky,
And all the fairies round about—
“Come away, heart, come away, heart!
There’s a bough of blossom high
Against the moon,
There’s a bough of blossom-bloom
High against the moon!”

Oh, it’s joy to be a-going,
Beneath the boughs of May,

The Garden of Seven Trees

To feel the jewelled blood come flowing
While the blossoms hang away
Against the moon!
Oh, it's joy to be a-going,
And I've worn the pathway true,
Joy, joy to be a-going
Back to you—
An apple bough hung straight against the moon!

Is everything afire against the moon?
Oh, my heart, be still and watch the dew!
Question not the night-bird where he flew,
Nor the fire upon the feather tips
That brushed against the moon!

A little luring pathway,
Luring thru the perfume and the gloom
Beneath the boughs of May,—
“Yesterday, yesterday, and forever!
There's a tomb beneath the moon,
In the valley beautiful,
In the valley beautiful with boughs of May,
There's a tomb beneath the moon,
There's a tomb beneath the burning boughs of
May!”

III

MORTLING

I

My thoughts come like a little Easter rain
Flooding the pink cups of an April moss,
And making a low murmur in the wood.
In all my mind they swell with tender pain —
Food-waters in the rootlets of a flower —
And beauty, hidden, dim, not understood
Haunts thru my being with the sense of loss,
A wasted infinite within an hour.

II

Then mourn the winds among the sedge and brake,
Coming from shores profound with death and dull
With unpromethean clay. Oh dark and deep,
Things wrought and things unwrought, what
sudden ache
Now urges this your mournful movement here?
Along the night you come with infant creep,
Crying alone like a land-wildered gull,
And striking thru my breast eternal fear.

III

What is your seeking and what is your end,
You thoughts that fall and sink and swell thru me
Like primal substance in a weeping dew?

What for my body's mortance do you lend?
For this my flesh is conduit intricate,
And you must work your fearful passage thru,
Tho costing me a deadly agony,
Toward what form, toward what formless fate?

FEVER

He hooked his leopard fingers
Like burnt tongs in my hair;
He clawed me down thru forty leagues
Of rotten red despair.

I heard the meermen's whistling cry,
I saw their white-struck souls
Snarled thick in seaweed green as fire,
Where the nether ocean rolls.

A ghastly heap in a bile-dark sea,
I saw the bones of men
Heaved slowly round by conger eels:
They seemed to live again,

To dance a heavy deep-sea dance,
With gawkish thumb and toe;
I reel to join them. Three times three,
And down like death I go.

The Garden of Seven Trees

A coral thigh-bone in my hand,
A green weed round my throat,
And underneath my bristling neck
The cold eels writhe and bloat.

A periwinkle on each eye,
A moon-shell at each cheek;
A little meer-damned incubus
Sat on my breast to shriek.

The hooked tongs clutch; I hit the sun.
All golden wild he lay,
And cuffed the gold froth from the waves
About a golden bay.

My breast grows sweet and ocean-cool;
The big wind shouts a song,
And like a cask of golden ale
Landward I'm hailed along.

The sands burn opal at my feet,
The wood is windy-green;
I pass thru emerald aureoles
In a forest all serene.

Thru banks of musky amaranth,
Thru aloe musks that cling,
Thru brakes of orchids, censerwise
Which hang and burn and swing.

And one blue dove moans softly
On a strange blue-breasted tree;
I kneel, I lie — a wind comes home,
And the cool blooms cover me.

THE GHOST

The notes of the red cock pierced my window
like pellets of carbuncle and struck into
my chest;

Beyond the East hills Morning was combing her
russet hair, and wild strands waved over
the hills as she combed;—

Then, suddenly, forming yourself out of the old
light of Arcturus in my northern room, you,
Ghost.

Silently, gathering white awe round you, pale,
oppressive, malignant at first;

Then, moving nearer my bed, a maiden woven in
cold opaqueness, smothering moon-snow
drifting across my brain,

A wind-flower drifting back into an old forest
of things anciently hidden,

Fading with mystical paleness out of my vision,
Gone!

NOVEMBER WIND

The wind is all one spirit of regret
Wasting itself among the ruined leaves;
It seems that God has that He would forget,
And that He cannot, lo, and that which grieves.

For surely this wild thing upon the earth,
Rooting the midnight like a famished boar,
Is something of a spirit hid from mirth,
A giant spirit, cosmic, aged, hoar.

And here it bruises all the mumbling hill,
And there it tramples in the valley low;
It must be onward, it is never still;
It has a heart of pain, and it must go.

How strange this woeful substance at the door
Knocking where man lives! he within the night
Trusting his little house and more and more
Merely asleep and waiting for the light.

So sure if love is on his arm that all
Is well, so sure of his next little day
And food and lips and laughter! — Wandering
Call,
Go by here, or go silent on thy way!

EARTH

What winds now blow and what full thunders fall
Over the earth, moving her solemn way
With all her silent dead! What a deep urn
Is she of her own dust, wrapped in what pall
Of spacious darkness!—Dreadful bosomed Mother,
Great grieving Niobe, while others burn,
Dark, dark your breast, and dark the tears that
smother
The Eden of your cheek which gleamed like day!

Where lead you now your foot? The beggar years
Bring their way-gathered burdens; what your peace,
Pacing a sad returning path like one
Blackly bewildered in familiar fields!
Your long, long sleeping children round the sun,
Asking but half-light, which he hardly yields,
You bear, and tenderly hope they wake, nor cease
Your dear pathetic quest, your parent tears.

THREE MEN

Three men sat in a book-piled room,
Crossed their great hands and searched the gloom
With deep and mighty eyes. The first
Held life to be a thing accurst;

The Garden of Seven Trees

The third of these exclaimed to say
That life was merry, swift, and gay;
The second only, slow to smile
And slow to speak, remained a while
Silent, and brooding deep as one
Who had some mighty thought begun.
Then lifting up his humble face,
He spoke mild words of thought and grace:
“Life is nor gay nor curst to me,
But rich with saving mystery.
On Grief’s dark front there hangs a jewel
Which makes her countenance less cruel;
And on the cheek of Happiness
A royal rose for our caress.
There is not in all Nature’s plan
An utter grief for any man;
And often some remorseful love
Alone can lift the eye above
The things that weight its vision down.
The good have said, ‘No cross, no crown’;
And they are wise who hold it so,
And learn the miracle of woe.
Nor lives there in the heart of earth
A pulse that leaps to utter mirth;
For that is but insanity
Which flies too wildly and too free.
Rather the human bosom would
Hold to the lovely and the good,
Hold to the faith of hidden power,

Hold to the consummating hour
That shall reveal life's brotherhood.
We know our joy thru blended tears,
We trust the deeper for our fears,
For our best love we pay with pain,
And for our sorrows love again."

AGE AND YOUTH

And there was one whom age with a grey hand
Had taken round the forehead, that he wept.
His eye was in the earth, his soul was dumb
With many years, and round his drooping form
An agony clung like a cloak of bitter rain.
He, seeing me and marking that my face
Was lifted to the wind, wailed after me:

"Ten years of passion and ten years of youth
Are dead in you, ten years of song are dead.
You had a love of white and awful power,—
That love is dead. You had a heart whose flame
Was busy round the beauty of the world,
And that heart lies in early ashes. You
Clasped a dark rose against your bosom, crushed it
On feeling of the thorn, and long ago
Your blood grew black among its petals far
On a far path. And once you raised a cry
Of hunger in a city of wild men,

The Garden of Seven Trees

A symphony of grief that they might hear
And learn your worship, and so save themselves.
But they nor heard nor turned nor cared to hear,
And you were left, your native faith alone
In fearful struggle with a monster power
Which killed and killed and killed and taught
you how

Man may grow dumb in misery. Behold,
I once like you had lips whose ready flame
Rushed singing at the world, returning thence
In bitter ashes. Once my eye was fire
Against the stars, my head hung on the wind,
My foot a wildling. But the years of earth
Taught my clear eye to dim, my head to bow,
My foot to tread the circle of a grey
And midnight place. That whole divinity
In which my youth cried brother to the world,
And wrought its creed, and worked its faith, is gone.
God drew behind the altars, and they fell,
And He and they were nothing; and the beast
Howled in the wood, and man howled like the
beast,

Flowers fell panting and the world grew old.
Youth, take the beaker of thy faith and drink
Its fiery liquid up, and mock despair!"

And this one spoke and sought my eyes and smote
His hand across them as he would have blessed,
But being blind, he smote my eyes, and wept.

And many a day I hoarded in my heart
His heavy sayings, till my heart grew grey,
And with an agony gave up its voice.—
Yet with the coming of the May I sang
Again, then knowing better why he wept.

LINES ON BEAUTY

I went where all the towers of Beauty stood
And took my heart and placed it in a street
Near a swift minaret of jasper fire.
“Here,” said my heart, “my prayer is answered me:
This minaret is benediction given.”
Ah, I was happy for the choice it made;
For there were towers that slanted past the sun
And hurled their splendid cornices of gold
Into the eternal spaces. I was glad
As one who in his native city finds,
Among great palaces, at last a home.

Two mightiest towers, I saw the First and Last,
And far between them swung the many years
As tho some huge arachnid had spun out
His web to prison time and all that time
Has bred. And, lo! as with my eye I swept
The measureless suspension, I beheld
That naked Beauty held the First and Last,
And that along the infinite gossamer,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Various, glowing, mightily hued, there moved
The same calm Loveliness, and all was one.

I have seen glory from the mountain top,
And gathered beauty with my hands from far
And ancient seas. Where men in æons old
Have wrought strange mystery of written, pale,
Eternal thought, or where with somber dream
They died, there have I chosen long to be.
Yet from it all, the passion and the sense
Of life's vast iterance, the stern recoil
Unto itself of the eternal norm,
The pitiful pathos of the million towers
Blown over by wild Iran's dust, I turn
To the low quiet of the human mind,
Within itself pacing the infinite height
Whose wistful loveliness is God. And in
The mellow-fruited sorrow that I find
Packing my heart with Wisdom's melancholy,
I best discern the Alpha and Omega
Within whose large suspension lies the whole
That I have been or I may hope to be.

CONJECTURE

The clouds like aged monks, bearing their stars,
Enter the high cathedral of the night
At holy time. Low in the western aisles,
Over the silver altars Levite-pure,

The Garden of Seven Trees

A radiant sacristan with censer curved
Pours thick libation sweet as smouldering gold;
And from her furthest transept field, and from
Her dread confessional forests, lo, and from
The anchorite basins of her deeps, earth sends
Eternal incense up. At such a time,
Impregnate with deep prayer, I mingle me
With psalms of ceasing, low chaunts of the soul
Seeking her loneliness, or seeking yet
The infinite Beauty of the All-in-All.

If there be vasts beyond the hot struck mind,
Places of quiet, steadfast, strong, and whole,
Eased of all urgency and undefiled
By fevered scarlet and the white of pain,
Give me to sink beneath the mellowing surge
Of my poor passion and go down to them.
Lo, I have loved and found and lost; and now
The light that burned my forehead has gone out,
Leaving a scar, and all my blood cannot
Fashion one rose within my flesh. I am
Grown old among a musky race of youth
Who wash themselves in dew and, white of limb,
Gleam toward desire, and have. Dimly I seem
To gather one poor vision in my arms,
One faded vision close above my heart —
If I might weep for her I yet would live!
But being as I am I long to go
Beneath the deeps, the whole and undefiled.

AH, SAPPHO

Ah, Sappho, sweet Aeolian,
Warm panting still for Phaon's love,
In Mytilene didst thou wear,
Mixt with thine olive, scented clove?

Soft! how the oleander bloom
Stains the wet marching of thy feet,
And how across thy double breast
The musk thorn bites the honey meat!

Passion's eternal phantom, thou,
Behold me deckt with columbine,
And in my clenched hand, one rose,
Dead as that palest flower of thine!

SNOW-MUSK

I have not known the brittle cup
That crashes with one evening's wine;
I have not known the scented grape
That bursts upon the mid-noon vine;

I have not known the musk and nard
Sweetening the flame of one mad kiss,
The one night's close delirium
That pants beneath a scarlet bliss.

I've often thought, before I die
One night I'd eat and drink, and go
A-reveling. But, ah, I've built
My house upon a hill of snow!

THE SNOWS

Wet wind tears
Powdered with starlight,
Silvered and made splendid
By a tattered brocade of moonbeams,
Curiously fashioned
By tempest-struck chisels of steel,
Airy and keen,
Flee down the wind paths.

They make grey flowers in the sky
Against the breast of evening.
Like flakes of shattered pearls they scatter,
Interlaced,
Moving with passionate wonder.

At other times
They are wings flung loose
From the bodies of angels.
They are the souls of God
In flight. A rich red
Music comes out of them

Like a fresh voice singing
Thru a golden trumpet.
And then they are feathers of sleep
Falling over the eyes of the world.
Were you to hold up a Calla-lily
And catch a deep trumpet full,
You could not see them,
They are so delicate and white.

They will cover all the city;
But in the morning men will walk on them
And they shall be mud in the streets.

BY AN EVOLUTIONIST

How shall one argue that the beast
Is quiet in the man at last?
The senile sinew burns the least,
The dew-drop in the heart is past;
And Age, who takes away the breath
Delivers man to spirit — death!

“The hey-day in the blood is tame”
And reason rules the passion down?
The passion is not there, the name
Is broken-tissue, brain-of-clown.
No phantom off-spring burns the face
Of father heat or mother grace.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Nor promise here of after life
That toils the brilliant slopes of time;
But something less than ruddy strife,
And something paler far than crime:
A dream that draws dim-curtained sleep
About the mystery of the deep.

THE MOON WAS WHITE

The moon was white and very, very new,
The moon was white, almost as white as day,
When he left his play,
And made no track on his white way to sleep.

But all the white of pale snow moons can not
Fill my dark footsteps deep,
My footsteps that sink ever on the way,
The white way that my baby went to sleep.

THE DIM WATER

How golden was the day,
And the night how golden,
In those olden, olden times
When we went to play
Under the forest tree,
Beside the dim water!

Oh, the dim water,
The rushing dim water!
I did not dream that it would carry you away,
In those olden, olden times
When we went to play
Beside the dim water.

HIMERIUS TO SAPPHO

Aeolian Sappho, rosy-breasted
Loveliness of the Paphian groves,
Bind on thy heart the warmest lily,
Bind it with bands, the gold-pure sweetness
Of thy nightingale-woven locks.

Come with thy soft foot shadow-saddled,
Sweet from thy bath, oh Lesbian daughter,
Bearing the flower to my trembling heart-ache,
Where I am waiting, rich oleanders
Softening my couch by the sea.

White are thy limbs 'neath clinging moon-silver,
Gleaming with pearls thy knees bend near me.
Suddenly down thou dartest. O'er me,
Burning my sense, thy bosom nestles,
Crushing the lily against my heart.

A SONG

Oh, sweet wild rose,
Tenderly you greet me,
Tenderly you meet me,
While all the wind is full of shadow
In the high tree bough.

Oh, sweet wild rose,
Alas! Who knows?
Is the thrush within the thicket
Is God's voice within the sky?
Far off I hear a cry,
"Beauty that endures,
Beauty that will die!"

Oh, sweet wild rose,
Where is he who knows?

The winds are in the bough,
And I am going now;
I have seen you, I have loved you,
And,—good-bye!

BLUE-BIRDS

I heard three blue-birds at dawn,
When sleep was leaving my eyes;
And my soul started up from her clean white rest,
And sang at the morning skies.

I heard three shadows at eve,
Come singing out of the wood;
And my soul had desire for her clean white rest,
And slept, for her rest was good.

A SONNET IN BLANK VERSE TO——

How softly Autumn comes unto these hills,
Touching them with her infinite dreams of death,
Like some tired nun of queenly heritage
Who prays herself asleep, her vestments fine
And various cast all aside. Yet here,
Above the pathos of her passion pale,
There linger high emblasted with old fire
The coronals of heaven. Ah, to me
This is the symbol sacrament of age
Coming upon your lifted brow! Even so
Let it come quietly, with kindly light
Searching away the loveliness of youth
And gathering that good unto itself
Which blesses down the heart with gentle sleep.

ROCKS

(TO MOTHER)

Except as fancy builds out of the deep,
And as faith forms,
No dreams have I of infancy and sleep;
In gentle storms
Of timid wildness visions rise and come
From that one moment when young memory
With young life locked her hand:
Before all else is dumb,
And after much is dead in me,
And I a stranger in my own heart-land.

Yet from the pathos of that earliest time
I have a store of sweet and mouldy dreams,
Old things of mist that will not lend to rhyme
Their substance, but like the deepening gleams
Of golden light, escape and are no more.
Disputing of her God,
With Nature I went out alone,
My lore
Only a child's heart;
And with a little rod,
Remembering Moses, I would strike some stone:
No water came; saddened I would depart.

In open fields I set up altars when
My feet scarce bore my years;

The Garden of Seven Trees

And many tears
I let fall in those places. Turning then,
Priestlike, I poured upon the wind
The incense and the rapture of my mind;
And often there
I felt the cold earth at my infant knee,
And my heart chilled at prayer.
The little piles of stone
I'd scatter out again to where they lay,
And ceasing there to pray,
Once more I wandered on, wild, passionate, alone.

Yet even by these altars I began
To sense the ages and the life of man.
I left my woeful worship, and to school
I set myself with some crude native tool,
Rock against rock, and cracking rock
To know the heart hid in them.
Many a gem
I found, and laughed to feel the shock
Of my small hands breaking the stony lock
Of the ages. Wild and white
The wealth of open casques lay in my hand,
And I would smite and smite
And feel myself an emperor in the land.

Nor did my impatient wonder feed and cease
Over the crystals of some ancient thing
That dreamed and had its peace,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Secure from tides that fall
On outward coasts, from tides long wont to cling
Upon the heaving breast of earth; and vain to
 its low sleep
The ocean voices when they call
Out of the deep.—
This holding in my hand, I often raised
My eye to where on northern hills there blazed
In mount fire, white clouds. These took
A being might on them; I would look
Saying, "The glaciers come again!"
My soul leaped up with awe and pain.
Treading the thunders paced in low stampede,
While the old North
Hurled forth
His ancient bergs. With monster speed,
Ploughing the heaving bosom of the world
These came, about them curled
Wild lights, and on them mountains set
Like puffs of dew, tho yet
From their torn bases streamed raw lava gold.
The earth grew cold.

A fantasy!
Often the great recoil
Of the thundering land-bergs held me.
Starting away, long day on day,
With naked foot upon the naked soil
Washed level by blown rains, I spent.

The Garden of Seven Trees

A lore I had of birds who seek their spoil
After revealing waters fall, and my intent
Was to secure from rinsèd fields,
Before the grain wove over them its green,
The treasure that disturbèd Nature yields,
Secrets of buried children. And I sought
Not vainly for some place where red men wrought
In former times their labor. I have seen
Whole ridges near some running water strewn
With chips of shattered flint, half-hewn
Arrow-heads, great tips of spear,
Unfluted tomahawks cast down in fear
Or the last weariness. Each plough-scattered ring
That marked the workman's lodge, I'd view
With utter melancholy; for the thing
Wove in me strange emotions new
Of life and death,
And the long failing of the body breath.

Her purer forms then Nature wrought
About me, taught
Her fuller lessons till the faith in me
Might rise and wrestle with its wing
Against the spirited air, and fling
My soul above the lower mystery
Of life. I well recall
One place most dear of all,
Where I held my communion,
Felt true the deep reunion

The Garden of Seven Trees

Of my being with all being. A place
Of trees where twin brooks run,
Where flowers woo open to the sun
Of every Spring;
Where thrushes sing,
And where one well might hope to meet God face
to face.

There while an evening fell,
And the mild hare-bell
Hung its frail cup of blue,
Filled with the gentle dimness of the night,
I knew
My vision, and the light
I am to give came swiftly to my eyes:
The stern emprise
Of seeking Beauty fell upon my soul,
And made it strong and rapturous and whole.

LINTELS OF THE SUN

I am lonely on my hill,
I have gathered many flowers;
But the moments tarry still,
Tarry still the weary hours.

Did you smile but to deceive
Grief that trampled in your heart?
If you did then I must grieve,
Grieve and weep and so depart.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Were you happy but to say
Words that paused within my ear?
If you were I must away,
Far away nor linger here.

Is it that the lily fades
Where the rose is spread in bloom?
Let me then seek valley shades,
Valley shades and valley gloom.

I am lonely on my hill,
Lonely thru the weary hours;
Shall I linger weeping still?
I have gathered many flowers.

SONNET TO——

She drank so greedily the day of love
That night came doubly soon to her. Where late
With golden horn under a golden sun
She sat, now shadows swarm, and dimly great,
Huge shouldered things push at the hills. Above
The place a windy star, and only one.

To her time is a heavy-footed thing,
Toiling down hills with dusty urns outslung
Along his side. There where the years have sung
Their ancient psalms of old remembering,

He moves with his great burden. Outward swing
The mighty casques, bumping among the flowers
Their aged bellies. After him the hours,
The hours, the infinite hours go toiling.

THE CANDLE

The wax of the candle
Lies in strips and splatters
Along the page where you bent to read.
I remember how red and tall the candle was
When I lit it—your face beyond the flame—
And how curiously thru the night hours I watched
the wax
Drip, drip, drip out of the little gutters at the
rim of the candle.
At half past one a horror took me:
It was lest you should read
What I had written at half past one the night
before.
Then—I don't know why—
I tore my note book open at the very place.
You read, holding the dripping candle.
I felt the words cringing beneath the wax
Raw from the wick:
The cut of your hand against my cheek,
The cut of your words at my heart hurt not
so much.—

Until the gusty morning
I stared across the page at the candle
Where you had left it.
When the sun shone
I saw nothing there but a pool of congealed
Blood-like wax, with a bar of wick fallen in it,—
Across the page with its strips and splatters:
Thin red serpents in a field of carbuncles!

TWO TRIOLETS

I

The tinkle of a mandolin
Along the waves of moon and white,
I hear it far and clear and thin,
The tinkle of a mandolin.
Well I recall what might have been
Another such a moonlit night:
The tinkle of a mandolin
Along the waves of moon and white.

II

Beneath the yellow tamarind
She stooped to soothe her low guitar,
And round her breast the loose scarf pinned,
Beneath the yellow tamarind
Shimmered like star-gold wrought and thinned
By sapphire shadow. Oh, lost star!
Beneath the yellow tamarind
She stooped and struck her low guitar!

REMEMBERING

I

Is it the scent of the cedar bower
Or the hour of the moon
That works in my breast?
Is it the beating of wind-strown waters,
The song of the daughters of foam
That has taken me home and given me rest?
I can not tell,
But the calm in my heart I know full well.

Is it the song of the pitiful bird
Overheard in the night,
The sweet of despair?
Or is it a memory ancient and olden,
The long ago golden light of your face
As here in this place you loved me, my fair?
I can not tell,
But the calm in my soul I know full well!

II

You lifted my eyes
To the lion, to the bear;
And now all the skies
Are asking, "Are you there?"

The Garden of Seven Trees

The waters of the deep
By the shoreline of the night
Are falling asleep:
"Who is waiting in the light?"

The earth shudders thru
All the arteries of her breast:
I weep to think of you,
And weeping, rest.

III

I cannot doubt that now alone
You wait the evening from the field,
You pluck the moss upon the stone,
You pluck the stone that will not yield.

The lark among the clover blooms
With one hushed twitter goes to sleep,
And from the valley float the glooms,
And from the marsh the vapors creep.

Nor yours nor mine the fault that now
We cry against the winds of night:
Life is not measured by a vow,
And vision measured not of light.

The Garden of Seven Trees

DEAD

I

The beauty of your eyes was like mist
Sunk in moon pools;
The beauty of your spirit was about you
Like odor of orchids;
Your laugh was a little star
Singing above paradise.

Now you are dead.

II

The waters of your little lake
Are pale laughter;
About your little chateau
There are shadows;
In the shadows
There is silence:

You are dead.

III

The blue-bird that you loved
Has closed his bill,—
He is gone.
The violet that I pluckt
Is sweet mould
By your pathway:
You shall not tread on it more:

You are dead!

The Garden of Seven Trees

TO —

Within the tomb of years I halted pace
To gaze upon each dead embalméd face,
To reckon once again the form, the grace.

And here were some whose cerement blossomed
 white,
And here were some whose cloth was as the night,
And here upon one brow rested eternal light.

In that great light I saw God's blessing glow
On two whose love was lily and pure snow —
But that was long, ah, very long ago!

Then up there rose each dark and fearful form:
They thrust their fingers in the light yet warm,
And chilled it, and closed on me like a storm.

I wonder often if you yet would see
A passion in this tale, close mystery,
Or turning, if you'd say, "Why, this means
 naught to me."

MARSEA

MARSEA

THE PEOPLE OF THE POEM

AN OLD MAN—Marsea's Father.

AN OLD WOMAN—Marsea's Mother.

MARSEA—a young woman.

MALATESTAA—an older woman,
friend of Marsea

THE PROLOG—ITS SETTING,—

The wood is dark and heavy with its own shadow. The disproportionate immensity of the trees and the rocks slowly appalls the sense and presses it at last to a state of incubus and agony. Among the trees, like a broken gray serpent, lies an old pathway. Two persons only can be seen: an old Man sunken upon a stone, an old Woman leaning upon a staff. When they speak their voices seem larger than they, and are hollow and toneless with extreme age and weariness.

OLD MAN

No, no. There is no use.

OLD WOMAN

We must go on.

The Garden of Seven Trees

OLD MAN

No.

OLD WOMAN

But she—

OLD MAN

Is lost. There is no use--lost!

OLD WOMAN

Lost! We must go on.

OLD MAN

The shadows
Are too deep.

OLD WOMAN

Come, Father, come.

OLD MAN

She said her soul was lost. There are
So many ways to what is lost.

OLD WOMAN

Come!

OLD MAN

I am afraid. My child!

The Garden of Seven Trees

OLD WOMAN

My child! Marsea! Marsea!

OLD MAN

Marsea!

(They go on weeping.)

THE CULMINATION OF AN INCIDENT.

A well of black water in a pit among cypress trees. Upon the lips of the well, cutting thru black mosses, are twelve red flowers. Marsea is sitting clutching one of these flowers at its root.

MARSEA

Beauty is blood! It was not told
Me so. Beauty is blood! I'll have
The secret of you from the root.
Or lower still, from the black sands,
Hued nightly darker by the seep
Of mists thru these thick mosses. So!

(She Digs)

Yet, yet no secret out!
A little wild earth mumbled at
My finger's end, where stood but now
The complete delicate being.
So now you die,—alive or dead,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Beautiful! Then beauty grows
Not from the earth it feeds on,
No, nor lives, but being dead,
Remains!

*(She suddenly casts the flower to the central
quiver of the well)*

The tip of the breast of death!
Moving with the hidden spring
Of death! Now the long pale stem,
Lying timorous for a moment,
Sinks, and downright, like a shaft
Piercing the spring, sucks from it, till
The flower, drawing a heavy color,
Sinks.—How black and deep these waters!

MALATESTAA

(from among the trees)

Marsea!

MARSEA

You!

MALATESTAA

My lovely friend!

MARSEA

Ooh!

MALATESTAA

Weeping? Sweet, sweet and wretched!

The Garden of Seven Trees

MARSEA

Why did you come?

MALATESTAA

I knew this place,
And feared.

MARSEA

And feared?

MALATESTAA

Feared. A little
White flame rose from my spirit
And led me here; you are my hunger
And my fruit.

MARSEA (*avoiding*)

Look there! Look there!

MALATESTAA

The uncharneled ghost of the moon, *wasting*
Along the wistfulness of day.
Even so he showed himself that time,
My woman heart its vestment dim
Of older years tore suddenly off,
When, pale with wonder, lily-like
We stood, fronting each other with
Our naked souls; and unabashed
We gave into each other's eyes
What maidenhood might keep from God.

The Garden of Seven Trees

MARSEA

The time, the time. I never feared
As then I feared, till now.

MALATESTAA

What fear?

MARSEA

In the imperial crown
Of the zenith heaven that night I saw
Two great gems loosen and, amazed,
Whirl in the purple field until,
Clashing, the great round shook;
And one alone returned to sit
Upon the dusky forehead of
The night.

MALATESTAA

So to commemorate
Our union the celestial flames
Unite in regal purity.

MARSEA

And when that night, weeping, I came
To the blue wall of Nadir deep
By the tarn of Shadows, you arose
And took me; and you spoke of beauty
Till the frame of the wide universe
Thinned its huge substance into spirit;

The Garden of Seven Trees

You spoke of truth until the heart
Of earth, hurled from its sling of mist,
Rushed ruining thru the inane dark;—
And all that night the rose-crowned jewe'
Burned in the well, and all that night
I wept.

MALATESTAA

Your tears were brighter than
The tears of sandarac, sweeter than
The tears of mastic, and more dear
Than all the tarn gems glancing deep
Into the infinite night.

MARSEA

After,
Alone upon the Hill of the Kingdom,
Among memorial emblems of
Your love, and munerary winds
Whose gift was the sweetness of the cedar,
I saw at race along the steeps
Of upper air, a golden bird
Crying distressfully, and a great
Cloud of hawkish shape whose wings
Touched at the East and West. These made
Their straining way across my vision
Until the sweet bird, failing at
The misty maw of the falcon tempest,
Uttered such agony that all

The Garden of Seven Trees

His breast burst streaming on the wind,—
And the cloud took him. (*She weeps*)

MALATESTAA

Was this the time the white star,
Rising against the North in snow
And pearl, suddenly wheeled and fell
Across the heavens, striking the southern
Pole in a red tempest, green
About its hollow throat?

MARSEA

The time!
And under visions we went to
The sea, and visions crept around us
In the cave of Love low by the sea,
And maiden wraiths of vision swept
Our shallop to the sea, and all
The sea rose in a vision round us
While we floated among the pearls
And fantasies of etherial green.
And when at last a frail mist rose,
Lifting our shallop out along
The jade-pale crests of the deep, you cast
One flower into the fair moon-azure
Drifting along our prow. All night
The flower moved on the samite waves
Dreamily shoreward, and all night
I watched it dipping under the long

The Garden of Seven Trees

Pale crests of pearl, until a whisper
Of sands came underneath us and
We stepped among the murmuring shells
Along the shore. There as we turned
We saw the flower high-shaken in
The hoar mane of the last vexed wave;
Then while the deep moaned, stricken
Across its bosom with wide flame,
The flower drooped down, a moment lay
Burning the wild opal of the sand,
And passed into the deep.

MALATESTAA

I knew
The morning came and caught the white
Of sea mist from our hair; I knew
Your brow was white and white your hands.
Only your eyes were living as
You sat among the weed-laced shells;
And in them the fraught phantoms gleamed
Working in mimic mystery
The passions of your soul. I spoke,
And at my voice your heart swooned
In one long pitiful sigh. You rose,
And like a babe bare-footed on
The winds of sleep, all tenderly
You lead me here, in innocence
Resting upon my bosom till
You sank to deeper realms of dream.

The Garden of Seven Trees

MARSEA

I dreamed. I never told the dream.

MALATESTAA

Your being weakened, and your body
Lay like a faint sob shuddering
Against my heart.

MARSEA

Too great to bear!
Mad with the thick writhing of
The abortive thought of sleep! You sat
On a high place, a windy sun
Coronal round you. Over the white
Of your shoulder a bronze-dim harp
Curved its wild throat. Your hand wrought
Gleaming upon the gleaming strings,
Unweaving long tresses of music
Which darted and flashed down the wind.
These came under the valley boughs,
Touched me, bound me like gossamers,
Lifted me thru the violet air,
And bore me upward. Dizzily,
Meshed with the mad light, my pulses
Beating under your hand, I came
Toward you. Then as I came the silks
Which bound me, fearfully coiled, bloated
And bulged at my throat and hurled me,
Dying, into a black wind

The Garden of Seven Trees

That rushed thru your harpstrings, pressed me there
While your gleaming nails cut into my heart.
I waked; your bosom held me; my eyes
Went to the depth of death. I knew
My horror, for I waked and it
Remained as when I slept.

MALATESTAA

Oh friend,
Into whose heart, lacking of husband
And of babe, I poured the pent
Languors of maidenhood, the full
Unquickened and unmilked life
Of woman, all those natural powers
Of passionate being, which compressed,
Unloosed, sought you the wilder way
In me, unnatural lived and mad
To spend my impulse, why must you
Be wretched in the impregnate love
Which springs from my charged bosom round
You purely?

MARSEA

I have told my visions
And my dream of visions.

MALATESTAA

Rest
But again where rest for you was sweet,
And for me the uncharging of my soul.

The Garden of Seven Trees

MARSEA

Never again in that sweet place
May I give up my heart to dream
And peace. Most tender is it that
A maiden leave a maiden when
Both love, and when around them
The stars have wrought their witcheries.

MALATESTAA

Remember but that better time
When low in whispering husks the ripe ears
Hung, and when the South pressed keen
At the wing-pits of the birds, and they
Were glad to go. You went with me
Among the jewel-weeds and the gold
Marsh daisy, the purple vervain and
The sweet milk-lavender, across
The cricket and sun-singing fields—

MARSEA

My death was hidden from these things;
And they were beautiful, as they
Shall be.

°MALATESTAA

Remember but the rains
In the sweet cedar, and the winds
That filled the night. Oh remember

The Garden of Seven Trees

The wet leaves fallen like a golden
Shadow about the trees, and
The stars among the shadow-leaves
At night!

MARSEA

These things are for the years,
And they shall be.—Have I not burned
To have one beautiful thing within
My keep and hold? I once did weep
Two days and nights over a rose
Fading beneath my tears, and they,
My very tears tore the sweet petals
From their place and lay with them,
Mocking their own sad source. Beauty
Is blood!

MALATESTAA

I do not understand.
You are going far from me; I cannot
Feel you near me any more!

MARSEA

These trees are large, reaching out
Above the night.

MALATESTAA

Their tips are silver.

MARSEA

These waters here are dark and deep.

The Garden of Seven Trees

MALATESTAA

The sands they rest on are of gold.

MARSEA

I had my visions and my dream
Of visions. It was you who taught
Me truth and you who taught of beauty,
And you consumed me.—

(Marsea leaps into the well.)

END OF THE INCIDENT

THE EPILOG

*The Old Man and the Old Woman on another
portion of the pathway.*

OLD MAN

The shadows are too deep, too deep!

OLD WOMAN

We never shall find her! We never shall find her!

OLD MAN

We are all lost, lost! (*He sobs*)

OLD WOMAN

Why are you laughing?

The Garden of Seven Trees

OLD MAN

I am not laughing.

OLD WOMAN

What was it that I heard?

OLD MAN

I do

Not know.

ALLADINE

ALLADINE

PART I

An April morning — the castle gate
Is wide to the wind, and standing there,
Singing a wild song, Alladine,
Alladine, the great earl's daughter,
Fair to see. Her silk-white gown
Is blown by the wind, and her red red hair
Is backward blown, and moving with wind
Makes living flame on the marble gate.
High her bosom and deep her eye,
Her lips two red harps arched with song,
And paler her cheek than the tumeric pale,
And her hands in the wind two lilies floating.

Around the castle a deep, deep wood
With a black tarn sunk in its heart; and thru
Its aisles of umber the hunter going
With cross-bolt set and with cross-bow draw
For oft at night a great owl floats
Over the tarn hoot-to-hoo,

And rattling rise from the deep
To clash their fine castanets
Of splintered and clapping thumb,

The Garden of Seven Trees

To dance a lean dance to and fro
Under the green of a windy moon.
But sweet is April! A fairy bough
The dog-wood lifts in the leafless wood,
And the cherry wild, the cherry wild,
White in the evening with drifting bloom!
Therein the nightingale is wont
To seal her wings with the amber dew,
To lay her breast in the pale blooms deep,
And touch her heart to the world's true pain.
Tremble the blossoms, the lilies tremble
Far in the vale, and the wild rose weeps,
And the white-veined birch is stricked with stars
That glance thru the dark of the larch and over
The willow sweet as a sea-fountain foaming.

A voice at her ear, for high her song;
A voice, a whisper, and wide her eye:

“Oh Alladine, fair Alladine,
Sing with your lips like red harps arching;
Your cheek shall be more pale, more pale
Before another Spring-time's breaking!”

There breaks the blue of the distance a rider,
Shot like a star from the hill-ridge green;
Flame in the azure, a herald galloping,
Gallop, gallop. The king's flag hung

The Garden of Seven Trees

At his trumpet's throat, a fringe of purple
Makes of its edges wearing with wind.
He plunges him down in the larchen valley,
And up from the valley he rushes like May,
And now he sits by the great earl's draw-bridge,
Sounding a blast on his pearl-dark horn.
In answer the watchman's trumpet. Down
The draw-bridge clangs; the charger neighs;
His gleaming feet on the dim oak thunder;
And low saluting fair Alladine,
The herald enters the marble gate.

Out the great earl strides from the castle
With pursuivant and herald before him,
A mighty man. And the king's herald speaking:
"My master, the king, sends me, Earl Gray,—"
"Your master, my master. Speak!" says the
 earl.

"Have we not tended our marches well,
Fought the heathen, our tribute paid?"
"Right well, stout Earl; and our master, the king,
Holds you highly, the which to prove
He rests his love in your courtesy
And comes with his queen and his court to you.
For he hears that the white stag roams your wood,
And he hears, oh Earl, and I speak it freely,
The praise of your daughter Alladine,
Fair Alladine, your only daughter,
Whose voice is a northern rill in the sun."

The Garden of Seven Trees

So speaks the herald; the great earl laughs;
And Alladine, hearing, catches her hair
In from the wind, and one white hand
Strikes to her breast and arches and gleams.
“Fair Alladine, your only daughter,
Whose voice is a northern rill in the sun” —
“So,” she thinks, “the great king spoke,
And the great queen heard him and all the
court!”
And hard she presses her hand to her bosom.

Fair Alladine is high in a tower,
Watching the way the king will come,
Singing, and watching the worn green way,
Singing, and listening the echoes sweet
That come from the castle towers around.
Bound is her hair in a golden braid,
Bound her breast with a cincture of gold,
And round her waist a band of gold,
And her feet in golden sandals gleaming.
Fair is Alladine to see
As she sings and listens the echoes fall
Back from the towers like low applause
Fresh and sweet to her shell-turned ear.
“The white stag roams the wood,” she sings,
“Lin-et, lin-o, lin-u,” she sings,
“And the king has heard of my voice,” she
sings,
“And the king has called me fair.”

The Garden of Seven Trees

The scarlet blast of a trumpet gleams,
And Alladine is mute the while;
A slight crenel holds all her beauty,
The grey dark merlon feels her hand.
Into the wood and out of the wood,
The king is riding among his train
His purple banners welted with gold,
And heavy they move deep under the sun.
The inner courtyard gate, it swings;
The outer courtyard gate is swinging,
And out the earl, pursuivants, heralds,
Spreading gold cloth, pale skins of the white
 hart

Over the way that the king will come.
Trumpets low beating, thin, sweet laughter
Rising among the turrets high:
The earl is kissing the queen's own hand,
The earl is kneeling low to the king.

Gracious the king: "Kneel not, my Earl.
My love would hold you of nearer worth;
And of my love dearest hostage I give,
My queen to your hospitality.
Yet why lack we here your daughter fair,
Whose beauty should grace our welcome
 royal?"

Tonight I shall crave her a song for my queen,
And see that she wear this necklace wrought
Of wild white diamonds close to her throat."



The Garden of Seven Trees

On the dog-wood bough and the wild cherrie,
Long the nightingale sounds her song;
The great moon goes up into the sky,
And the winds fall out of the sky and cease.
It is early evening and near the time
When the bellman shall sound the feast of the king.

“The king’s own diamonds, bright are they!”
Thinks Alladine in her castle bower,
“And well shall I sing for my own sweet queen,
And all shall mark me and hear me sing;
The nightingale in the wild cherrie
Shall hush and harken only to me.”

She lifts the necklace, she holds it high;
Wild, white and wild the sweet light flies
And beats and pulses and swims in her view
Under the red and the thickening gold
Of the candle gleam. A moment, then
The great gems close to her throat she binds,
And wan are they, her throat so fair;
Out laughs she softly, so pleased is she,
And warbles a lyric repressed and sweet,
Until her throat and the gems together
Live like white water beaten with sun,
A northern rill in the white sunshine.

Wide the hall, the great torch flaring,
On jewel-struck branch the candle high,

The Garden of Seven Trees

And high the windy censer burning.
With flashing cup the great board set,
Woven with gold the women's hair,
And a twinkling hilt at each noble's side.

Loud the laughter, the rough, free joy,
And the king arises and calls for song:
"A song from our north-land nightingale,
Our Earl's fair daughter, Alladine;
A song from her, a lyric gay
To fit the ear of my lovely queen."

Earl Gray is rising; his daughter's hand
He takes, and leads her high in hall,
To a lifted place set round with bowers
Of the dog-wood white and the white cherrie.
So bowered she is with sweet and fair
That the good king laughs and tosses his wine:
"Behold, my queen, a nightingale
More fair than ever you did see,
A nightingale in the white cherrie!"
So smiles the queen; and Alladine
Hears pulses beating one, two, three,
And lifts her voice in a lyric gay.

A white hart roams the green wood thru, —
Lin-et, lin-o, lin-u —
A white hart roams the green wood thru,
And the king is riding in scarlet and blue, —
Lin-et, lin-et, lin-o, lin-u.

The Garden of Seven Trees

“Now who can draw me the longest bow?”

Lin-u, lin-et, lin-o.

“Now who can draw me the longest bow,
To fetch me this hart, I fain would know?”

Lin-u, lin-et, lin-o.

“And that can I,” says Fingeret, —

Lin-o, lin-u, lin-et.

“And that can I,” cries Fingeret,
And he shoots with his bow, does Fingeret,
But the white, white hart is roaming yet,

Lin-o, lin-u, lin-et, lin-et.

There rises the queen and all arise,
And from her own sweet breast she takes
A broach of heavy gold, deep set
With rubies four, and rimmed about
With sky-blown sapphires fair. She flings
The token, and others fling of broach
And necklace and chain and ring
And nuggets of gold from the snow streams pickt,
And raw gems gathered on far warm shores,
Until fair Alladine is standing,
Her white foot set in a pool of gold
And her ankles wrapt by chains of pearl:
A fountain she of high white fire
Bursting from deeps of crystal flame.

The bellman has frightened the drowsy owl
Who sits by the bell in the high hall tower.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Fair Alladine, the earl's one daughter,
With the kiss of the king on her cheek, is standing
Alone in her chamber, while the night
Breathes vainly of rest thru her casement high.
And far in the East a pale wind gathers
Itself into hints of roses and dawn.
"The white stag roams the wood," she sings,
"Lin-et, lin-o, lin-u," she sings,
"And the king has heard my voice," she sings,
"And the king has called me fair!"

She loosens her hair of its golden braid,
The cincture of gold from her breast she flings,
And from her waist the band of gold,
And her feet from the golden sandals gleaming.
Oh fair, oh fair is the earl's one daughter,
And down she kneels on the rushes sweet
Where her jewel cask foams, and swift her hands
Burst into the deeps of emerald, amethyst,
Onyx and opal, jade, ruby, and pearl,
Of windy sapphire and diamond wild,
Until she laughs and winds her arms
With the vine-long chains, and lifts her hands
Full foaming with gems to her throat so fair.

A tap at her door — an owl at her casement;
She startles, a coronal slips thru her hair.
A tap at her door of a withered hand;
She asks at the door for the knocker's name.

The Garden of Seven Trees

“The fairy mage of the king am I,
Old and wise, very wise am I;
Open, fair Alladine, let me in.”
Fair Alladine listens her heart; says she,
“Why do you come? why want you in?”
“You sing like the nightingale, Alladine,
Open, fair Alladine, let me in.”

The door is open, the withered mage
Like the green of the morning enters the room;
He touches the candle and dims its light,
He sits in the rushes and rolls his eyes.
“Now speak you fair to a maiden fair,
Since now I have let you enter in.”
The owl at the casement snips his beak,
Drops thru the night and is gone.

“Eat,” says he, “the tender tip
Of the tongue of the nightingale.”

Fair Alladine to hear these words
In wonder sits and listens her heart.

“Eat,” says he, “the tender tip
Of the tongue of the nightingale.”

And no more words than these he speaks,
And the red cock crows, and out at door
The wizened mage is vanishing.

The Garden of Seven Trees

“But wherefore, wherefore, fairy mage?” —
“You shall sleep and dream.” — he goes.

She lies her down on her own sweet couch;
Its touch is full of sleep; she dreams.
The candle sputters, the witch-hood nods,
And woe is her for the dream she dreams.

END OF PART ONE



ALLADINE

PART II

ALLADINE

PART II

The great earl's hunters, a score strong men,
Are summoned in hall. Their mantles green
Are tucked thru bugle bands of gold,
And white their long bows shoulder-slung.
"Now God be true to bowmen strong!
And why be we here?" says Fingeret.
"The beech-nut swells with honey-fat,
The acorn swells above its cup,
The fawn is weak on its milky hoof,
And why be hunters summoned in hall?"
"It is to let the long shaft fly
Its white way thru the beech so green,"
Says one, "to slaughter the day-light owl."

There enters in haste the mighty earl,
And his eye is great beneath his brow.
"Hark ye," he says, "my huntsmen all,
For I speak of my daughter Alladine,
Whose heart is ghosted and wild and sweet,
Whose voice is a north-white rill in the sun.
She sings at morn before the cock,
She sings at noon, she sings at night;—
While the glow worm paces the leaf's mildew

The Garden of Seven Trees

She sings in her sleep to her casement moon.
And here be coming from court and hall,
From castle and court and outmost hall,
Duke, baron, and count, marquis, and earl,
And the king's own son to hear her sing.
Hark ye, huntsmen, break your bows,
Shear in twain your amber strings,
Break your shafts, your quivers shatter,
And off, off all with this beechen green.
Plain suits of black from this you wear,
Sandals of fawn-skin softer than leaves,
And when you hunt, you hunt with the springe."

"Right noble Earl," cries Fingeret,
"And I shall break my good long bow!
God's curse! Ript out of the black ash heart
By a tempest bolt this bow of mine;
And so be I struck when on my knee
I bend it but to shaft and string!"

The mighty earl he strides one pace,
Fingeret before him lies,
The black bow broken across his throat.
"God's curse! and be you hunter of mine,
You hear my will!—For she dreamed a dream,
And you shall do, as I bid you do,
For she dreamed a dream you cannot know."
Each hunter snaps his good long bow.

The Garden of Seven Trees

“Now get you suits of black, my men,
Sandals of fawn-skin softer than leaves,
And get you springes,—the forest thru
Set them and take the nightingale.
Nor harm them wholly; but clip their tongues,
Of each the tip, and bring the tip,
And these shall be my daughter’s food;
For she dreamed a dream that ye must not know.”

“And well must she sing,” cries Fingeret,
“Who eats of the tongues of nightingales!
“And well must she sing,” cries Fingeret,
“Who would sweeten the silence she makes but
now!”

The huntsmen are going silent from hall:
Their long bows lie where they throw them down,
Their quivers spilling the long shaft lie,
Low the silver-lipped bugles lie,
And the gold cords curl in the mantles green.
“Well must she sing,” cries Fingeret,
“Who sweetens the silence that comes but now!”

A black wind mumbles beneath the moon
And fills the dark wood with its sound;
A shadow is wild on the windy night,
And a whinnying cavalry break the trees;
But here are forms more dark than wind
Who feel the touch of the night, and go

The Garden of Seven Trees

Silently here and silently there,
Alone beneath the demon boughs,
Boughs that cross and clap and whine
Like quarter staves in strong wrist play.
It is a night of wammer and wailing,
And over the tarn in the heart of the wood
The great owl swoops and shakes the mist
With wail and hoot and sniek and sneer;
And the ghost men rise and shake their feet
Of slippery bone on the cold tarn's eye,
And clap their hands and clash with their breasts
In dance and rondel of nadir hell,
A dance to a whistle-bitten tune
Blown shrill from sockets of toothless jaws,
Blown out of a cave where the tarn-men sleep.

So thru the night the hunters toil,
Their springes set, and take the bird
Of sweetest tongue, and clip the tip
Of the tongue and loosen the bird again.
The forest has for all its woe,
No voice, and silent weeps alone.

With the wan night over their faces, the hunters,
Fawn-sandaled, return at the green of the morn-
ing,
And the kitchens steam with a golden broth,
And Alladine, the earl's one daughter,
Sings and sips of the golden broth.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Sips and sings and laughs the while
That the rude swain halts his ox to hear.

The Prince is coming, the earl Du Care,
And many a knight and baron bold
Are coming to hear fair Alladine
Sing in her hall on festal day.
Long the hunters have toiled that night,
And each a nightingale has taken,
And Alladine has drunk right well
Of the golden broth, and makes to sing
As never she sang a golden song:
All night an owl at her casement sat,
Snipping the bones of a lesser bird.

“Wine, wine, red wine! Pour till the horn
Is rosy at lip, and the red froth winks
Away in pearls down its slippery side!
Wine, wine, red wine! And drink, my squires,
Drink till the burning beaker is cold,
Down, down to the fairy Alladine!”
So the Prince, for the feast is set,
And he clashes a horn with the earl and drinks.

The earl's own daughter is rising in hall,—
But what is that which touches her eye?
Is it the witch-mist slowly drawn
Round the woven paces of Death's lank men
Who dance to a whistle-bitten tune?

The Garden of Seven Trees

Nor sees that eye the huntsman dark
Who weaves his way among the wood,
Who bends to the spring,—and the sweet blood
 leaps
To the heart of the ghasted asphodel!
For she has dreamed a wondrous dream,
And she has drunk of the gold-red broth,
And her sweet tongue lives beneath a song
That startles the diamond in her red hair,
And the ruby low in her fairy throat.

There is a golden forest
 Where the low white breezes blow,
Where the sun wakes, and the moon wakes,
 And where wild waters flow.

There is a golden forest,
 And it is fair to see;
For flowers are there and birds are there,
 And the white winds are free.

There is a golden forest,
 And who would call me fair,
And walk with me and talk with me
 On the sweet green pathways there?

There is a golden forest
 Where the white wind is low,
And the full white moon, and the white flower.
 And where I must go.

The Garden of Seven Trees

The Prince is standing with his eye
Right round and wholly bright to see;
His wine glass tips, and his jewelled hand
Lies burning in the red, red wine.
“Fair Alladine, I do entreat,
What means your song of white and low?”
Her hand at her throat, she speaks no word;
Fair Alladine is sinking in hall;
The great earl starts, and on his breast
She sinks and weeps a woeful tear.
The guests rise up and quickly go.

“My own fair daughter, Alladine,
Why weep ye now so sore, so sore?”
“My father, my father, I do not know;
But the owl all night at my casement sat
Snipping the bones of a lesser bird;
And my voice is faint within my throat,
My tongue too weighted with gold to sing.
Ah woe is me for the dream I dreamed!”

The night is come, and Alladine
Is lonely in her high hall tower;
Her sick heart fills her breast with tears,
And a naked wind stalks moaning round.
From far she seems to hear a wailing
That bites at her ear like a viper green;
And prayer comes thick within her throat,
But her tongue hungers and cannot pray.

The Garden of Seven Trees

And the rushes sweeten beneath her tears
As she kneels and hungers and strives to pray:
"Oh, Mary, my Mother," she strives to pray,
"Oh, Mary, my Mother!" she can no more.
For still from far she hears a wailing
That bites at her heart like a viper green,
And her heart so broken and sweet with pain
Rises stark and strikes in her breast
A bitter stroke: she makes to go.
The candle sputters, the witch-hood nods
To the black draught drawn thru the open door.

And Alladine creeps down the stairs,
Along the mumbling hall she creeps,
Into the night of cold deep stars,
And wakes the porter at the gate.
"And who are you?" "Sir, I am one
Who has done a mighty wrong." She goes.

Into the forest right bitterly
She leads in humble fear her way,
And ever about her the silence drips
Like black dew down from the rotted bough,
And timidly ever she stops to listen,
But the silence weeps and on she goes.
No voice makes sweet the whole night wood,
And Alladine is sinking down
Into the thick and heavy dark
At the mouth of the cave where the tarn-men sleep;

The Garden of Seven Trees

And out of the cave the whispering wail
Comes like thin arms round her, sinking.
“And ye must sing,” the whisper wails,
“Sing to a forest made dumb for thee.”

Then Alladine lifts up her eye
All in the forest at midnight hour,
And the mists like long sloughed viper skins
Are coiled round the dead men dancing there
A lank bone dance, and round and round
The dead men go, and round and round,
Their white feet slapping the black tarn's eye,
And in their hands wan wisps of fire
Which they hurl with a tooth-whistle down the
wind.

Was ever such a sight before
Spread to a lonely maiden's eye?
“And ye must sing,” the whisper wails,
“Sing to a forest made dumb for thee.”

“Oh Mother of Christ,” thinks Alladine,
“And sing I must, but how shall I sing?”

Then on a bow the jasper moon
Set its green feet and swung o'er the meer,
And silent shapes came one by one
And sat in the dark of the jasper moon.
To see these Alladine must weep,
And the tarn-men stretch and chatter and wail

The Garden of Seven Trees

And whistle a black wind thru her tears:
"Oh Mother of Christ," she moans, "sweet Mother,
As I am Motherless, help me now!"

But the great owl hoots along the mist,
Bearing an echo of hell in his beak;
He snickers and snaps his lips of bone,
He sits above her own sweet head,
Snipping the bones of a lesser bird.
"And ye must sing," the whisper wails,
"Sing to a forest made dumb for thee!"

Then Alladine lifts up her eye;
Their good tears take the moon's own light,
And soft her heart in her bosom trembles
For the silent shapes beside the moon,
And nothing thinks she of aught save these,
And sweetly she weeps and weeps her woe.
"Oh, proud have I been in my glittering hall,
A sinner in scarlet and white and gold!
For a selfish joy I have wounded the world,
And out of the sweet of the forest's tongue
I have made a food for my vanity.
Ah, that a king should call me fair,
And a sweet prince speak his love of me,
All for the vain, vain songs I sang!
I have not loved; my part is woe.
God have pity on my woe!
Mary, my Mother, comfort me!"

The Garden of Seven Trees

Comforted of her sin and woe,
She tenderly lifts her voice to sing:

Love would wake in the morning,
Glittering, high, and vain;
Love must sleep in the evening,
And sleep in pain.

Sing not so low of dreaming,
For love shall come again,
Haply under the morning,
And clean from pain.

Down sink the tarn-men in the meer;
The coiled mists thin and fail and go;
And the great owl buffets the night with wings
That are full of flight and windy fear;
And the moon sweeps up, and the nightingales
Burst from the bough in chorus full,
A golden hymning of love eternal,
Till out of the night a white hand reaches
And presses the brow of Alladine.

The Prince he hunts the forest thru;
The castle bells have tolled her flight;
And the porter swears a ghost went by
And touched his keys. The mighty earl,
He cries to horse, and all are out.
But the Prince he hunts the forest thru;

The Garden of Seven Trees

His heart is wild with bitter pain:
"Oh, that I might see her face
But once to charm my bitter pain!"

He nears the tarn. The sun is high;
It burns the dew in the violet,
It burns along her dreaming brow
And round her finger tips in the leaves.
He trails his purple scarf in the wind,
He gathers her life in his own true arms:
"Oh, Alladine, fair Alladine,
Waken, waken, fair Alladine!"
But she wakes not yet; and when she wakes
A pure white tear is in her eye,—
Low she kneels and listens her heart,
And the Prince is kneeling with her to pray.
The king's great earl he sees them there
And kneels with his men that all may pray.

THE END

THE SEEKERS

THE SEEKERS

To Hibbies of Same-House

The curtain goes up like mist lifted by morning wind. A stage, heaped with a living gray light, is revealed. The foreground is a section of a wide street which runs obliquely from left to right. From this street rises a massive wall of astounding dimensions, and along its heavy surfaces thick lusters ripen continuously into deep tone. A little to the right is a gate of wonderful proportions. It is set in an arch in the wall and is held by hinges and locks of corded gold. Upon the gate there are runes written in thick letters, set about by gems which glow and gleam.

Hidden in the gray light there are little laughs, the faint flutings of delicate voices, the snap of far steel cymbals, singings and chauntings. Forming themselves from the light, wings appear, ascending and descending, moving down the street, clustering about the gate and tapping it with the agate lamps suspended at their tips. At times the wings melt thru the gate and seem to pass beyond. At times, and unproclaimed, Voices chaunt and Symbols sing out of the light.

The Garden of Seven Trees

A delicate strain of music which takes voice in one word:

VOICE

Beauty.

There is an opal flash of a wing, and the music leads away from the word, to return with timid echoes from every part of the stage:

ECHOES

Beauty — Beauty — Beauty — Beauty —

VOICE

Exceeding Loveliness.

ECHOES

Exceeding Loveliness — Exceeding —

VOICE

The Heart of God.

ECHOES

The Heart of God — The Heart —
The Heart —

A timid iridescence pales radiantly center stage. A Symbol sings. Light music blends in about the voice.

The Garden of Seven Trees

SYMBOL

There is a drop of rose blood
Hidden on a star,
Hidden in a cavern of beauty,
Hidden on a radiant island
Set about with radiant waters,
Hidden, hidden, hidden
A drop of rose blood on a star.

A thicker light appears in a cluster of wings at another part of the stage, from which a Voice chaunts:

VOICE

In the pale, hoarse caverns of time
Seek for the echo of seas,
Seek for the sands that crept from the clime
Of the lavender orchid breeze.
Seek for the shell that is purple
From the press of the unfathomed tide,
And for the green sea shadow
That sleeps like a bride
From innocent lands,
Sleeps on the lavender echoless sands.

SYMBOL

Seek and seek and seek again:
The pearl of longing is the price of pain.

The Garden of Seven Trees

VOICE

Star wind, star wind
Is flaming thru the mist flowers
In the gardens of the mind.
Terrible it is to seek,
Terrible it is to seek,
Terrible it is to seek, but more terrible to find.

VOICE, *answering*

The mist is but young witches' hair
Grown gray with fright,
Pulled thru the night
By nails on the finger-tips of shivering breezes:
All is fair and all is fair,
But there is a midnight wind that freezes.

*A tide of color, like some heraldic influence
moves across the stage and washes the walls and the
gate.*

VOICE, *proclaiming*

A strip of gold, a street,
A gate from which no dews can fall,
Higher than sunrise light, a wall,
And seven barren beggars meet.

*Seven beggars come on, moving slowly among
the wings. On their heads they wear crowns of
uplifted hands. They are dressed in robes of*

The Garden of Seven Trees

one piece. The colors of their robes are green, gold, purple, shimmer-dusk, red, vari-colored, and black with white. They sit in a semi-circle before the gate, clasping their hands over their eyes.

SYMBOL, *singing from above*

Hidden, hidden, hidden yet,
On a star, on a star,
Hidden is the beauty you never can forget,
The rose blood where the orchid shadows are.

SECOND SYMBOL, *from above*

Seek and seek and seek again,
Seek and seek and seek again.

A CHORUS OF VOICES *chaunting down the street*

Come you early, come you late,
He who seeks must sit and wait.
Eyes that seek and see must close,
No one knows and no one knows:
No one knows and no one knows
The dark within the shadow and the light within
the rose.

After a movement of wings, the beggars speak. Not until they have spoken do they remove their clasped hands from before their eyes.

The Garden of Seven Trees

FIRST

I seek for *Life*. (*Green light*)

SECOND

I seek for *Death*. (*Gold light*)

THIRD

I seek for *Longing*. (*Purple light*)

FOURTH

I seek for *Sleep*. (*Shimmer-dusk light*)

FIFTH

I seek for *Pain*. (*Red light*)

SIXTH

I seek for *Broken-Things*. (*Vari-colored light*)

SEVENTH

I seek. (*A shadow with a white wing in it passes*)

Again the fluting of delicate voices, suggesting violets chanting the matins of the sun, or lilies in chorus like the nuns of Verdi.

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

These voices take the color of a whisper
And lead me in a leash of pearls.

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

I feel
The tug of wings about my eyes, the lift
Upon my lashes of some fingers slight
As filaments of eider.

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

Potent, too,
As dawn-dews swelling wide with sun.

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

Brother,
No morning influence here, but such as comes
From evening buds of primrose. The cordial
Ripple of some dark wine I scent, shot thru
With shadow-shafts of breeze, and lifted
Curving above a valley bosom-grown
With violets.

THE SEEKER FOR DEATH

What is this place? My eyes,
Unrested from the dust, amaze themselves
To look up into wings.

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

This is the place
Of the great portal and the wall. I feel
Already that I've followed out the full
Length of my way. Yet now I burn the more
To know what lies beyond.

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

These years I've walked
Upon my heart. My foot is weary of
Its pulse. The portals of my journey have
Been many; but they opened not unto
The thing I sought: always the waste, and way
Boiling to the remotest verge of space,
Hoarding its tidal heaviness in dim
Disastrous sunsets. Here against the deep
Russet and gold of this embossed gate,
I bend the passion of my quest. And yet,
Here is a dimness in the very eye
Of light, the terror of the last assay.

THE SEEKER

Our way of weary distances is past:
The dumb soul's deep disturbance, the great fast
Of years, the pilgrim passion, and the urge
Of our own planet tide whose deeps submerge
The sensible will, and leave the spacious power

The Garden of Seven Trees

Of our own minds o'erwhelmed in vague and dread
Rushes of swelling cosmos, thru the dead
Horror of unknown forces,—these and all
Are swept at last against this massive wall.

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

The sweet influence of wings, of songs
Caught in the open lips of echo, and of light
More mellow than the girdle of the sky,
Presses me here to rich delirium.
Oh broken heart, and heart of broken love,
Here is your happiness before this gate!
Heavy the scroll-like portal, and the script
Of God, and yet ——

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

We are but beggars all.
Before this last thick-lustered gate, before
This wall like mountains piled on sunrise, let
Us sit. For here is symbol of our lives:
A windy street, a locked gate, and a wall
Higher than vision. All my being rolls
To the drum notes of vast voids beaten upon
By clubs of thunder. From the hollow midst
Of Chaos' stumbling heart I own a pulse
Pushing my life to verges vast and dim.
There to my fearful eyes the distances,
Distinct in nothing, show such awful forms,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Huge, vague, straining with trouble, that my soul
Jumps from me in somnambulistic terror,
Seeking to fashion all, compose the dream.

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

Brothers, I seek the broken things of life
That I may fashion them to beauty. From
Whole things no new perfection can be made,
Nor quiet loveliness nor loveliness
Startling itself to tremulous unfolding.
But give me a lost shard of star, a flake
Of moony crispness, swift-cut sectors of
The space entwisted comet's beard, a flash
Of fin-carved cataract, a drop of night,
And such things fairies carry in their eyes
When they're most swift in love, and pixie jewels
Stolen from a cache under huge rainbow roots,
Give me but these, and in the single turns
Of my heart's radiant kaleidoscope,
I'll show you form on form of beauty, rare
Invested individualities
Of loveliness. Give me but broken things.

A SYMBOL, *suddenly singing*

On the hearth of Vega
Lay a flute of flame,
On the hearth of Vega
A flute whose stops were spurting fire.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Why are all the ashes
Upon the hearth of Vega?
Ashes, ashes, ashes,
And a dead desire!

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

Earth, gowned with night perpetual, footing
The winds of infinite waste, distemperate
With reeling powers, and hugely interlocked
In the minuet of God's remorse, tosses
Her bulk against the breast of space, muttering
In dervish madness her eruptional pain.
I who am born of dream-wrath, storms, and
 powers
Eruptional, attended dreadfully
By the incubus of a pre-natal being,
I who am hauled toward some drear end by an
 influence
Felt numbly and horribly, I, whose fevered flesh,
Bitten by ulcer, dug by cancer, torn
By mandibles tarantular, yet hangs
Flapping against its bone rack, I, brothers,
Lift my sore hands beneath these healing wings
To catch their wafted medicine. It is
Not and it is not and it is.

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR DEATH

Within

The black heart and beneath the eyelid gray,
Engendering influences of eternal cold,
Begetting on each other, brought me forth.
Some finger, rubbing thru the dust of tombs,
Touched me to quickness and to thought; so that
I rose in my blank swaddling cerements there,
Peered thru the distances beyond the dawn,
Into the red mist of a giant heart.

From thence there crawled toward me infinite
Pulsings and forms veiled foolishly. These crept
In thick amazement to my very feet,
Like virgin worms in beatific fright,
Then, striking their heads thru that thin pall
Which hid what lay behind my back, they rose,
rose

Like myriad phoenixes gifted with flames
And golden shoutings, rose and swept into
The vast increasing glory that piled its
Billowy substance in refulgence heaped
Against an ivory throne. Like tides they swept.
Was this a dream? I know not, but I seek.

There is a great music above the gate, a concentration of wings into a pearly moon, and then a quartet of Voices chaunts. The beggars cross their hands over their hearts.

The Garden of Seven Trees

VOICES

Beauteous blood of agonies,
Rushing to marble pallor of rose,
Catching the form and spirit of snows,
Holding them melted, delicately still,
Beauteous blood of agonies,
Here is a pearl to drop to your deeps.

Here is a pearl to drop to your deeps,
And the plummet soul of God shall strike
Down thru your deeps, with chisel-wings carving,
Carving the marble pallor of rose,
Carving the forms and spirits of snows,
Carving them, carving them till they are free,
Free, God-wrought from the beauty and blood,
The beauty and blood of agony.

*The beggars uncross their hands, lift their eyes
about them, and finally bend their looks upon the
Seventh, who rises and speaks earnestly. The light
upon the gate diffuses itself into a general richness.*

THE SEEKER

In Life nor Death nor Longing, nor in Sleep
Nor Pain nor Broken-Things, nor deep in deep,
Nor high in high lies the true quest: behold,
The runes upon the gate are script of gold!
To seek and therefore still to seek, indeed

The Garden of Seven Trees

Eternally to seek is text and creed
For beggardom. Our perfect sorrows smite
Our blood, and then are wrought to deeds of light.
The most dumb wonder is our wisdom. Ask
Meekly for all in nothing, only ask
The fitness to desire all things greatly,
And those most which most are unattainable.

*The lavender light on the gate quietly grows
intense as, from above, there sounds a chorus of
Voices and Symbols. The Seeker presses his open
hands against his bosom (hands as white as lilies
in a field of night) and remains standing with
closed eyes until the conclusion of the song.*

CHORUS OF VOICES AND SYMBOLS

I

The naked wings of light are lifting,
Upon their tips of calcedon,
Agate flames of mossy dawn;
And the glory is drifting, drifting
Down the walls,
Like an orchid shadow sifting
The moonlight as it falls.

II

Mossy are the flames and like bracken waving
highly
On a hill of sunrise naked to the sun,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Mossy are the flames and like ferns and flowers
waving

In auroral breezes fresh and rare with sun,
Mossy are the flames that strike the hoary gate,
Sinking into amethyst and burning into gold,
Glancing blunted from the hinges, from the huge
and heavy letters

Of the script runes that are never, never told.

III

Will the hinges ever swing
When the wing tips touch them?
Will they shatter all the lamps of agate
Into shards of dim disaster?
Faster, faster, faster
The orchid light is rushing down the walls:
Will the hinges ever, ever, ever swing?

*The beggars give expression to dumb agitation
and awe. Quietly the light increases to serene opal
and diamond pearl.*

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

What portent rides the music of this chant?
What indefinable presagement? Warm
And opiate richness floats that lovely way
My dreams come. Tumbling fountains of brave
sound

The Garden of Seven Trees

Are blown to mist of dulcet symphony,
And wander down in dew upon my soul.
I feel at last along the garden paths
Of mind, the tread of that loved being who
Shall burst the chrysalis of dream, and stand
Awful and perfect to my very eye.

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

What wings are here! These dripping tips of speed
Have surely struck to shards the altar vase
Of Lord Jehovah's deepest wine, and now,
Eager with vermeil tincture, eat raw space
Empty of gloom. Their carved agate lamps,
With crystal mosses burn like star-spray. See,
The light sweeps off the hoar frost from the walls,
And inlays the hoar gate with ferny fire,
Lavender gold, and purple porphyry.

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

And down the street, whose way for me has been
A hard way swept with spittle-dust and wind,
A maiden angel sunbeam dances fast
Beside the happy, happy heart of youth.

CHORUS, *repeating in the distance*

Will the hinges ever swing
When the wing tips touch them?
Will the hinges ever, ever, ever swing?

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

Within my heart I feel a sorrow weep,
Like some young babe weeping within the womb,
Fearing its birth.

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

And trouble lies against
My soul, like oleander blossoms blown,
Smothering sweetly.

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

Trembles now the light
Over the gate? The great runes start and swell
In new conception of portentous truth.

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

And lo! the wings strike ever on the runes
And dash their tips of calcedon to flakes
Of rose. Against the portal's base there lie
Dim shards of agate from the wrecked lamps
strewn:
There let me kneel and pray.

(He kneels before the gate)

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

Vague, vague and awful were the words they sang:
"Will the hinges ever swing?"—What lies beyond?

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR DEATH

The mystery of death!

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

Of life the secret and the thing I seek.

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

Beyond there is a garden of dark lilies
Swinging with pale dew at their lips, and streams
Of ebon waters flowing thru dim banks
Of asphodel.

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

Perchance there are no distances
Beyond, so that the hand may touch the fruit
And body of the soul's full eye, the dreams
Of vision and the images of sense.

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

This runed and lustered gate will never swing
But to reveal the teeth of engineeries
Munching the world; and that huge goatish power
Which milks the noonday from the mountain peaks,
And bunts those breasts of earth flat to the plain.

*The Seeker for Broken-Things rises, letting
drift thru the light two handfuls of agate shards.
He addresses the Seeker for Pain in excited reproof.*

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

Beyond are fairies seated on wind flowers, hair-bells,

Primroses and daffodils, all madly capped
With pluckt inverted violets, with prankt
Nasturtiums, and columbines dripping
Red and gold honey down their backs. Lovely
Their little feet dangling in pans of dews
Which sweet fern grasses treasure from the stars.

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

The gate is shut!

OTHERS

The gate is shut! The gate is shut!

THE SEEKER

I will lift up my voice against some wing
Whose disembodied flight culls the pure air
Of so much wonder, and will ask that thing
Whose answer must reveal what's hidden there.

(A Symbol comes on surrounded by heavy light)

Oh, gracious influence, pause and lower down
Your flaming tips of flight! Let no dark frown
Dimming your agate lusters, strike these meek
And barren beggars here who only seek
Beauty and balm and truth and mystery.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Tell us, what is this gate whose history,
So heavily written, weighs the eye of sense
To an unprofited close?

THE SYMBOL

If all you known were unknown,
It were better, better far
Than to know the things which are
Beyond this wall of symbol stone.

Dome and spire and minaret,
Never yet and never yet
Rose alone and cut their beauty
From the pallor of the dawn.
Beggars, beggars, now begone;
For the gate may swing
At the touching of a wing;
At the touching of a wing,
The gate may swing.

As the Symbol vanishes, a CHORUS OF VOICES

Sit in the dust of the street,
Barren beggars, it is meet.
Spread your hands in prayer,
Cup them to the winged air,
Clasp them to your eyes and hearts,
E'er the mystery departs.
Barren beggars, barren beggars,
Sit in the dust of the street.

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

These voices yell like cymbals, or like iron
Tambourines, in the cave of that great Satyr,
God, the Circe-spouse and swineherd of us
All. Whips us squealing thru the blackness,
Feeds us husks of cruel wonder, leads us
To deep troughs of bitter admiration
Which reflect our tusks and jowls. Brothers,
Broken is my speech — my heart is broken!

(He sits apart, weeping)

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

Sweeping toward the gate, I see a host
Of veiled forms such as often we beheld
Pass in dim barges down the ghostly ways
That are the doubles of the brooks of heaven!

THE SEEKER FOR DEATH

And lo! they melt within its substances
And seem to pass beyond. The hinges hold,
Grasping among the runes, their noble power
Against motion. Fear throws her shattering wave
Like folds of doom around my soul. I'll go
And touch the gate.

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

The wings may strike the lock!

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

It is more fit
That I should be the first to touch the gate.

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

Do I not hear a crying from the walls?

THE SEEKER FOR DEATH

You hear the winds dropping exhausted at your
feet.

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

You hear the angels' lovely feathers
Patting the tender spaces of Paradise.

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

Go not to touch the gate! Sit in the dust!

A VOICE FROM THE GATE

Read my runes,
Count my jewels,
Read my runes
Or ever you come to me.

THE SEEKER

The jewels are infinite, the runes are old
Bedded in fossil flowers of ancient gold:

The Garden of Seven Trees

Truth cannot be except it be but so.
These scripts were better read before we go
Too near the gate. Hark how the iron song,
Chorused with prophet voices, volleys along
In full returning echoes: "It is meet:
Oh, barren beggars, sit upon your feet."

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

Dearer than truth, than Christ's unanswered
question
Is the thing I seek. I will not turn away.

(He goes toward the gate as if to open it)

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

Do I not hear a crying from the walls?

*There sounds aloud a crying voice like an angry
eagle rushing from her eerie. The Seeker for Long-
ing is struck with a pause, his hand outstretched
toward the gate. All the beggars look up in sad
terror.*

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

There is a sword falling thru space, a voice
Singing mightily at its tip!

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

It is a dream!

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

It is a steel sword al' unhande'd, swift.
It's flaming down the archway of the wall:
If it should strike the lock! ——

THE SEEKER

Lo! Lo! It strikes!

The beggars cover their eyes and kneel, facing the gate. There is a great flash of fire that blasts the color from the walls and the portal which like a slab of slate swings back revealing a blank waste of utter nothingness. After a silence the beggars take their hands from their eyes and one by one put their crowns onto the earth before them.

THE SEEKER FOR LIFE

I see nothing beyond!

THE SEEKER FOR DEATH

Nor I!

THE SEEKER FOR PAIN

Nor I! O!

THE SEEKER FOR LONGING

I see a wide space ——

THE SEEKER FOR SLEEP

Blown full of poppies, gray
Sunken into pillows.

The Garden of Seven Trees

THE SEEKER FOR BROKEN-THINGS

God makes but perfect things! (*Weeps*)

THE SEEKER

I am content.

*They sit silent. A Symbol, most beautiful, comes
on, singing.*

The light has gone from the walls,
And the heavy runes are gray;
But you have your hearts, you have your hearts,
And you'll have them always.

(Lights softer)

Oh, Life and Death and Longing,
Oh, beggars, Pain and Sleep
And you, the Christ of Broken-Things,
Never weep and never weep;
For you have your hearts, you have your hearts,
And you'll have them always.

*The Influence passes, and a rich light crowds in.
A lovely music sounds the emotion of spiritual
happiness*

THE SEEKER

I am content.

THE GARDEN OF SEVEN TREES

THE GARDEN OF SEVEN TREES

*To P—of the golden foot, who has journeyed
here, a companion.*

ELEMENTS OF THE POEM

MAN

SEVEN SPIRITS OF QUESTION

TWO GOOD SHEPHERDS:

 The Golden Shepherd of Souls

 The Silver Shepherd of Flesh

GOLD SHEEP

SILVER SHEEP

VOICE OF THE GARDEN

VOICE OF THE SPACES

VOICE OF THE SUNS

VOICE OF THE ABYSSES

A VOICE IN THE GARDEN

GOD

THE BASKET CARRIERS

THE UNIVERSES

THE LOVELY WORLD

MUSIC AND RADIANCE

The Garden of Seven Trees

SCENE AND STATEMENT

Among the Upper Spaces and above the Abysses, there comes out of the blackness, distinct with diamond outline, the Garden of Seven Trees. Near the upper verge of the Garden, beneath the Great Tree, sits Man. From his place he views immediately before him the Field of Bright Space, from the further end of which rises the Mystic Mountain. To his right and left he views the Endless Expanses quarried by the Abysses and overhung by the Upper Spaces whose suns pour down an endless light thru the darkness and into the deeps.

Behind Man lies the Garden, a place full of radiance and all manner of beauty. Above this Garden hover the Seven Spirits of Question, and in the Garden are the two Good Shepherds with their Flocks.

To the right of Man is one particularly deep Abyss, into which continuously is plunging the fall of the Red Sun. At the bottom of the Abyss, indistinct in the warm feathering mist, is a world which beats like a heart, the Lovely World. From this world, breasting the cataract of light, Thoughts in gold and silver flashings rise and are led into the Garden by one of the Seven Spirits.

Man, gowned in a glowing gray garment, sandled with pale dusty slippers, rests on a mound of green gold.

The Garden of Seven Trees

VOICE OF THE GARDEN

Glorious is the garden of radiant pastures,
Cool to the silver lip of the flesh,
And warm to the golden tongue of the soul.
Its mounds of loveliness are the feeding place of
 beauty;
The foot of the hungry is refreshed at the root of
 the grasses,
Refreshed beneath the flower of the grasses
And among the fallen fruit of lilies.

Glorious is the garden with its seven trees,
Mighty to take the wonder of the suns,
Mighty to stand in the spaces.
Their arms are curled cataracts of gold
Reaching upward into the immensities;
Their heads are rounded mountains of topaz;
Their roots are veins of rich ore grappling the
 abysses:
Glorious are the seven trees of the garden.

Glorious is the garden with its flocks,
Its flocks like leaves that are white with the new
 moon at morning.
Its flocks like leaves that are fat with sunlight,
The lovely care of the Good Shepherds.
Their silver feet are in among the lilies,
Their golden feet trample among the roses,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Their voices are diamonds and rubies in the low
bushes,
Gems and trumpets in the grasses:
Glorious is the garden with its flocks.

Over the garden are the Seven Spirits;
Strong are their feet with talons,
Their wings are mighty.
Over the garden are the Seven Spirits;
They carry their joy in their beaks,
Their birth was afar off.
Pilgrim, with the dust of the distances
Piled like wan silver in the folds of your garment,
Rest in the garden.

VOICE OF THE SPACES

I am the Spaces.
My bosom is full of the breath of the Mighty,
Black and sounding are the deeps of my bosom
Ribbed with the white bones of the vast uttermost.
In me are lost the abysses and the universes;
They call to each other and cease in the midst
of me.
Like blind glowing worms are the round-toiling
systems,
Spinning a frail silk and casing each other
With laces of silver, with gowns wrought golden.
I am the Spaces! And in my bosom
I toss with my panting the suns of the ages.

The Garden of Seven Trees

Pilgrim, with eyes that are dark, dark with
searching,
Touch with your vision the sweep of my beauty.
And rest in the garden.

VOICE OF THE SUNS

Our food is the will of God,
Our light is the purpose of the Supreme.
Over the heavy-mouthed abysses,
Bellowing and deep down booming
The rumbling thunder of our cataracts,
We hang forever.

Out of us rushes forever
The fleeting steep gulfs of wild glory;
The wonder and wonder
And might of our thunder,
Never and never shall fail.
We fill the abysses and wild wildernesses
With glory and beauty and praise;
The steep glowing gulfs of our glory
Never and never shall fail.

Ours is the rainbow
Sinking low
And outward gleaming;
Ours is the radiance, the brilliancy streaming
Into iris and mauve

The Garden of Seven Trees

And madder inwove
With diamond lace and pearl mist
Far below;
Ours is the joy of the day and the deeps
And the steeps
Where we list
To break our breasts open into a rose.

Pilgrim, we are the Suns.
We eat of the baskets of mercy and spread our
power.
Rest in the garden.

VOICE OF THE ABYSSES

Our lips are dabbled black with space,
Our teeth are green glaciers shocking and grinding,
Our throats are red volcanoes groaning
Eruption of lavas and rubies.

In our bellies lie the green white world
Feathered about by the wings of Jehovah;
Blue steel is the shield of Jehovah above them,
Blue steel jewelled rarely, a marching place
For jade-pale stars, heeled with wonder,
Striking the night jet into red beauty;
There pass also grey panoplied armies
Of oceans abundant, clouds doubling and march-
ing.

The Garden of Seven Trees

We are the quarries, the pits of beauty;
We scar all space, we swallow the suns;
Our breath is a whirlblast ridden with rubies;
The deeps of our blackness are fastened with
flame.

Pilgrim, in thy foot is dominion,
And in thy breast is a heart for terror:
The beard of Jehovah is blown thru the suns;
There are mighty ways outward.

MAN

Pilgrim of the immensities, I have
Attained thru the wide dreaming of my soul
This place of beauty. Here my great desire
Feeds full of wonder, and my heart beats to
A worthy worship of the infinite.
No longer now my straining sense divines
Things greatly hidden which it may not know,
Majestic things even at the finger tips
Of mind, yet moving outward into mist,
Ungraspable. What horror was it then,
When underneath the gripping incubus
Of my strange inability, I felt
About me hosts of unknown things, discerned
By the soul's fine antennae, but not known!
Objects of beauty still beyond the eye,
Music wrought subtly, still beyond the ear,

The Garden of Seven Trees

And every sense in agony tantalized
By wistful wild imaginations. So
A frenzy grew upon me till at last
In a hot twisted darkness fire began
To spurt fierce lightnings round my mind, and in
The blackness of pine-mumbling winds there
rushed
Fountains of fairy sweetness cool from heaven
And made deep wells within my bosom, soft
As rest. Then a new mind came upon me,
And what was once deception vanished quite,
And what desire proved thru its longing stood
Instant and cherishable. Thereupon
The limit of my easy ranging thought
Slipped out from world to world, from universe
To universe, thru space to outer space
Even as it willed. Union with God remains.

FIRST SPIRIT OF QUESTION, FROM ABOVE

Oh, astounded mortal,
With the azure of agony circling your brilliant
eyes,
Unfettered here from sense, whose element is
sense
And limitation, listen to a voice
Which elsewhere has been heard.—Remember yet
That ere you strove with the Powers and con-
quered them and came

The Garden of Seven Trees

Beneath this tree, how to your infant eye
The systems coiled away. Now rising above your
self,
You here mistake your littleness of sense
For the mightiest verges of outroaring space.—
These wings and those of all my sisters have
grown wan
Beyond the little margins, and our eyes,
Born out of space and testing easily
The ever-flowing leagues, saw yet no ending.

MAN

Bring now the concourse of your sisters round,
And we shall judge whether their wings or these
My thoughts have striven outward most. I deem
No feather, even of spirits, has the lightness
Of vision, no, nor yet the strength of faith,
Nor yet the swiftness of my keen desire.
Within my bosom there is that which owns
A Father, whom I seek. Eternal Beauty
Has put his spittle-moistened clay upon
My eyes even at the womb's mouth. Go
And call.

The Spirit vanishes toward the midst of the Garden. There is a sound of a red trumpet's winding, and then a shivering of the atmosphere as the Seven Spirits descend and stand about the base of the mound of green gold.

The Garden of Seven Trees

FIRST SPIRIT

Lo! here we stand whose wings even now
Shook all the spaces.

MAN

Harpy-angels, terrible and beautiful!
What is your property?

FIRST SPIRIT

To question all that is—

SECOND SPIRIT

All that is not.

MAN

No more than this?

THIRD SPIRIT

And more than more: to sit upon our trees
And guard into the Garden, flesh and soul,
Those beings from the Lovely World who rise
Against the cataracts of the great Red Sun.

FOURTH SPIRIT

And then to watch and wait, to watch and wait!

FIFTH SPIRIT

To hover and to hover,—

The Garden of Seven Trees

SIXTH SPIRIT

Or to go
Outward thru the rivers of the blackness
And the tides of darkness and the falls of thunder,
Outward to the regions where the spaces pale and
 dim,
And brighten into voices crying wonder,
Into mists where failing oceans join the utter white
 of distance, and beyond.

SEVENTH SPIRIT

Tip to tip your wings spread outward
As you would above the foam moons
Calling on the mystic ocean.
Fiery tip to tip surround him
Till he doubts no more the question
That has gone beyond his dreaming.

*They spread their wings tip to tip and so stand
enclosing Man in wan green light.*

MAN

Your wings have touched the beautiful, but these
Your breasts above your hearts are pale. The
 night
Has fallen round your faces, and the night
Hangs in the hollows of your throats. Yet deeper
In your wing pits is a ghastriness,

The Garden of Seven Trees

And these your eyes that you bend close upon me
Wear scales as do a sloughing serpent's eyes.
And with these would you see? The might of all
Your wings is blind, and darkly have you spoken.

FIRST SPIRIT

We speak the darkness of the question.
Outward swept we. Thinly failing
The space-bows bent around us, on whose backs
Great stars rode, and under whose dim arches
 swung
Milky eternities of infant light.
There working thru the black and hidden roots
That fed the fearful heaven, we descried
A saffron emptiness. Ah, pale indeed
The mystery we carry in our wing pits,
Closest to our hearts! Boast you against the
 deeps?

MAN

It was not here to boast I wrought my way,
But to ease all my worship in some prayer
Whose loveliness might equal that same Beauty
You know not, and to whom I pray. In all
Your coursing over all the tides, your sweeping
Circles round the ocean's failing foam,
Saw you as yet my Father and my Mother
And my Brother? Saw you as yet this Beauty?
Or sounded yet this Infinite with your wings?

The Garden of Seven Trees

Make not yourselves so terrible, but answer.
For well I know this Being is, tho yet
I see Him not.

FIRST SPIRIT

Nor ever shall. Among the filling tides
There is no place for such an One. He wrought
In other times a huger universe
Of vast and awful powers whose waging strength
Swung upward into ruin; He is gone.
The ruin only battles down the waste,
Illimitable in concourse working war.

MAN

Go! Now I see your sense is little and
Your darkly flaming bulks clipped in wan fire
Are hollow, wanting anthems, wanting soul.
Almighty are the spaces, temple-roomed
To give eternal echo to man's worship.
The halleluiahs to the Mighty from
Earth's trumpeting hills re-chorus here their joy,
Doubling the majesty of praise. Even now
The lilies break beyond you and the palms
Flash golden. Hosts of lovely brothers come
Bearing hosannas in their bosoms. White
The space before me gleams. Behold! Behold!
Ten million marching with one voice, and ten
Times these ten million in antiphony.
Oh God, oh Beauty, One in One and All,

The Garden of Seven Trees

Appear! My eyes seek for your naked face,
My heart for your great laboring bosom seeks!

*Man stands with his arms stretched out toward
the Field of Bright Space which is revealed to him
more and more. The Seven Spirits rise, throwing
down about him their ghastly light, and chanting*

Seven trees in the garden of beauty,
Seven trees in the garden of chaos,
Man in the garden of beauty and chaos,
Death in the lilies, doom in the roses.

*Far down the Field of Bright Space, ascending
and descending the lustrous stairway that leads up
the Mystic Mountain, and going out to the Suns,
the Basket Carriers are seen. They sing:*

SONG OF THE BASKET CARRIERS

Gems and blood we carry in our baskets,
Light from the eyes of the Eternal,
Life from the heart of the Supreme,
And the hunger and the hunger and the hunger
Of the suns we feed.

Our ways are outward and inward,
Woven ways among the universes.
Gold lives upon the soles of our feet,
Gold is pressed into our paths:
The spaces are in flower with our going.

The Garden of Seven Trees

The lips of the suns are heavy with hunger,
And there is no limit to the Beauty of God:
Gems and blood we carry in our baskets.

MAN

And my lips, too, have tasted of this blood!
Upon my heart I know the power of life
Pressing its inner throbbings to my pulse,
Until I move commingled with all things.
Even so I feel the quality of God
Which is to give from His sole self that being
Whose myriad blooms darken the diamond edges
Of the white mountains.—Here I lift my soul
To the uttermost by one quick thought that there
Is yet a vaster thing than the uttermost,
A heart within it all.—On either hand
The gathering spaces rise, charged with loud suns
Whose cataracts mouth thunder in the deeps.
Yonder the lovely mountain lifting up
The beauty of this field to cloudy light;
And here this garden rich among the spaces,
Set with broad trees like rooted constellations
Grown close with gold. Here roam two mighty
flocks
Deep-smothering their shining lips among
The glooms of rounded lily fruits and shades
Shook from thick roses. Fat their silver sides
Pant with their feeding on the nectar flowers,

The Garden of Seven Trees

And fat their golden bellies moving low
Among the oleander blooms. Perchance
These two who watch them, seeming strange to
me—

And yet not strange—may speak and tell me all
That vision brings me here so marvelously.
Upon the brow of one there sits a frail
Clear brilliance, like remembered starlight fallen
Pale to the eyes of immortal infancy
Wide in their æon gloom; and on the brow
Of that one other flows a light of deep
And pitiful yearning.—

*There breaks in a VOICE chanting from the
Garden.*

Saffron sleep folds long mist
Over the eyes of the dreamer,
And seals the lips of the mist with amber:
Dream, dream, dream.
On earth there was a yellow war
Between the Flesh and the Spirit.
Neither was whole, but each the bigot
Struck, and the tender breast of the other
Wincing like the nightshade apple,
Madragora's sweet full apple,
When the fist of frost strikes up from the fen-land
Under her canopy low and green.

The Garden of Seven Trees

There were stars in the cool of heaven,
Thoughts of God and the pale hereafter,
Of spirits folding like valley lilies,
Their perfumes mixing, their sweets entwined;
Thoughts of life in the one forever,
Anthems lifted aloft the stars,
Bearing in whiteness of chanted hosannas
The two made one to the last high union:
Two lost together and one forever with One.

There was the hot, hot musk of the rose
Bare on the forest path beneath bare feet,
The breasts of women close-cinctured together
Brewing a perfume mad and wild.—
Dewy banks of violet, violet and asphodel,
Matted in the morning, strangling in the sunshine
Of loosened hair and sunshine,
And in the odors of the tigers that hurled and
tumbled there.

Nard and sweat and lilies pale,
Sweat and nard and roses red,
On the earth, on the earth;
For the mind of God was bleeding,
And His heart was white and wistful,
When He wrought the miracle,
The miracle imperfect of the great love that
made it,
Costing Him the expiation of the æons and the
cosmos.

The Garden of Seven Trees

As the Voice is chanting, the two Shepherds approach Man. One is gowned in a simple garment of silver, the other in a one-piece garment of pale gold. They seat themselves silently beside Man and so remain until the Voice has ceased. Their eyes are heavy with love; there is a great wistfulness in their faces.

MAN

I seem to know you by a memory in
My mind and by an echo in my heart
Returning fresh from white crags sweet with snow.
It was not in that first eternity
When my soul slept among the high blue foun-
tains,
Dreaming its æon music; no, nor when
In earlier birth I drew apart from one
All-multitudinous chaos cradling me.
Was it when nebulous glory whirled itself
Into a system that rose like swift larks,
Gold breasted, silver voiced against the dawn?
I can not tell; but of me there is much
That sought you somewhere sometime heretofore.

GOLDEN SHEPHERD

Immortal is the essence of your heart,
Drawing its nature far down gleaming beds
Of God-struck waters. In those mighty days
When God reached out His hand and felt the chaos

The Garden of Seven Trees

Plunge willful, wild with strange got power, nor
heeding

Whence came its fullness, then God closed His
hand

And held the infant forces, fashioned them

In serviceable form, and peopled them

With beings who might joy to recognize

Their maker, unrebelling, full of worship.

Thus wrought He; and I heard a voice that said,

“Come forth, for we have now made man, no
senseless

Property revolting under law, but such

An one as cased in a sweet substance may

Companion me. And therefore now look well

That nothing of this lovely creature go

Unshepherded. His thoughts of soul I make

Your care; as golden sheep they shall arise

From out the Lovely World, and you

Shall pasture them among the Seven Trees.”

So Lord Jehovah spoke; and much of you

Already here I shepherd in my flock;

For of your immortality partakes

Each golden impulse of your living soul.

MAN

With you, then, are the glories of my soul,

Which, passing from me, could not die or yet

Forget their parentage. Converse I held

The Garden of Seven Trees

In unsubstantial mystery with these things,
Nor lost a thought, even to my God-head, of
Things born in me. And so I knew a sure
Eternity begun in me, nor lost
The parting breath, the wonder and the clamor
Of my sweet worship. This my entity,
Tho centered here, already wings the spaces,
Myriad voiced, and tender in its multitude
To one whole Beauty. Like a wind my soul,
Dropped in a million flowers, arising thence
In essences of dew toward one Sun.—
And you, whose brow a patient sorrow bears,
Where has my being found its love of you?

SILVER SHEPHERD

Where substances were wrought into first beauty,
Delightfully shapen with fancy supreme, even
 where
Your being found its loveliness of form,
Within the sweet hands of the Lord. Then spoke
 He:
“Come forth, for we have wrought a mansion fair
For Man, and veined it up and down with life,
Packed it with fruit, and set a light within
It, set our nard upon its altars, set
Our harps of ages playing there with might
Of psalms. Take of this living mansion now
The eternal care, or until such a time

The Garden of Seven Trees

As well may come." So speaking, down he smote
His hand upon my forehead, and left there
The finger furrows of His agony.—
The infinite impulse of your unsouled heart
I tend, my silver flock among the trees.

MAN

I had a lesser sense for such a thought,
Yet rendered sacred by the wine it dipped in,
The blood-thorn sacrament, the midnight sweat
Of the Great Heart.—Was it not possible, then,
In all the lengths of time to sour the sweet
Of flesh? And cherishes God in silver cask
The panting agonies of lily night?—
Now firm completeness closes round my faith
That I shall know this Beauty and this God
While so I stand, my myriad self inmixed
Already with the universes which
Must live; for I have tasted life with them,
And been their foot, their eye, their mouth, their
tongue.

*Now sounds from the deeper garden the song
of the flocks, sung in antiphonal manner. Man
stands during the song; the Shepherds remain bowed.*

The Garden of Seven Trees

Song of the Flocks

SILVER SHEEP

When into the eye of God
There fell out of the blackness
Pale forms of beauty,
Then knew we our being.
Swift was the starlight
Over the bosoms of burning orchids:
The white desert ached at our birth.

GOLDEN SHEEP

When God was utterly weary
And had put His head beneath the deeps
That no glory might assail Him,
Then a dream grew in the spaces,
Touched the outward failing foam that rims with
 beauty
The immensities, and all that was
Left wild of God, and so descended,
Downward till it made a pillow beneath the deeps.
The brows of God were bare;
And the great eyes closed
Were more lovely than wild calla-lilies
Rare and budding full.
The brows of God were bare,
Bare as cliffs of diamond mountain,
And the great eyes closed
Were two lovely conyons mounded full of lilies,

The Garden of Seven Trees

When the dream beneath the deeps
Rose and smote along His brows
Like gold thunder out of morning:
Then we knew and had our being.

SILVER SHEEP

Forms were we of pale created beauty,
Made from the delicate atoms of God's vision
When vision lingered young within His mind;
Forms were we in pure wing-living silver,
Loosened into shape by bladed fire
Cleaving our outlines close and free.
Then from the vision outward flashing
We sought the cataracts of the great Red Sun,
Plunged with its pulse, smote out at last
Our loveliness into a heart lesser than God's,
And yet so roomed and living so by love.
Thence warmed again by some strange passion
Stirring its arms about us, we rose, fire in our breasts,
And cooled our breasts against the cataract
Until down-warded here by unwilling angels.
But still our passion moves us, and we know our
 ways are outward,
Somewhere among the universes blown and far
 and wild.

GOLDEN SHEEP

When the dream smote,
And the thunder broke white on the brow of the
 Lord;

The Garden of Seven Trees

When the deeps rolled
And lifted the lilies above His great eyes,
Our elements gathered from the far-fringing foam
Of the out-going measureless ocean,
Were struck by His spirit fresh from its rest,
Sanctified, glorified, rendered eternal.
We not from the mind of the master Creator,
But high from his spirit dream-struck in the high-
est
With tender and infinite morning.
So floated we forth, down the white winds wander-
ing,
To the Lovely World in the iris abyss;
And there achieving our wonder were loosened,
Returning like glances of light to the spaces,
Led here to the shepherded flock of the Garden,—
But yearning for the out-flowing measureless
foam
Of the ocean immense with an infinite being.

SILVER SHEPHERD

Hear you these chants? Oh, brother!

GOLDEN SHEPHERD

Yes, I hear.

SILVER SHEPHERD

And have we tended these in vain? Their being
Was elsewhere fashioned and yearns elsewhere to
Be going.

The Garden of Seven Trees

GOLDEN SHEPHERD

Useless then our mounded pastures,
Our silver lily fruits, our golden apples
Of the musk rose; useless then our hearts
Blood-warmed and spirit-fired, our tender
Ministrations.—Behold the universes
Sweep, their ways are outward, and these go.
In vacant richness shall our pastures bloom,
Smothering down to ashes. Wet with blackness
The flowers that were silver on your pathways,
The flowers that were golden by my footfall!

MAN

Are these flocks then of me? Of my own flesh
And of my spirit?

GOLDEN SHEPHERD

Yes, but first of God.

MAN

And am I one with these and so eternal?
So is my God eternal? I like Him?
And I shall measure out myself thru all
The eternities, never wasting tho
Upbuilding? And He, eternal in division,
Eternal and eternal and eternal,
But beautiful in all? Shall I be lost
At last with Him and all be lost in all?

The Garden of Seven Trees

Or shall each live with all and each be all?
Look! down the field of Space a lovelier light,
And those strange beings toiling up the mount,
And here a glory moving in the Garden,
Thru all the upper spaces pathways gleaming,
The universes forming with their bosoms outward,
And the thunder and the wonder, and the foam
Dashing far out where the black oceans toil
Against the uttermost. My God is here!

*Man and the Shepherds bow while a great chant
rises from the deeps.*

CHANT OF THE UNIVERSES

We, we the elements of chaos,
Brayed by almighty pestels
In the pit of the eternal,
Roar, roar, roar.
The abysses are our coarse-voiced trumpets,
Black-throated, twisted round with cobalt,
Full sounding craters of eruption,—
We roar.

Now is to be born a new cosmos,
Now is to be born a new cosmos,
Born out of fury, born into beauty,—
We roar and come.

*There is a great movement among the universes.
The Basket Carriers are seen rushing back out of*

The Garden of Seven Trees

the spaces and hastening up into the mists of the mountain; the clouds break away higher and higher.

MAN

“Now is to be born a new cosmos” out
Of the old chaos! So the master cycle
Swings beneath my view. Now shall I see
Born Beauty sweet from the womb arise
To hail its Father with the voice of storms.
So worked the miracles to this one age,
Brewed, wrought, and labored to this only hour.
Such voices yet shall rise to God as only
The voice of man has little echoed in
The transepts of his temples. Hear! The voice!

The VOICE OF GOD sounding from the Mountain.

Man, know you the being from whose self you are.
What wild high pilgrimage now brings you here,
Corse-fettered still, striding these mighty ways?
Why tempt you now My bosom with that form
Which love could yield only in dreams, and which
Love hungers for till dreams returning bring
His children to the Father? Speak to me.

MAN

I thought thee awful, found thee kindly, voiced
Humbly, with simple mercy loving me.
So this great moment but a little be

The Garden of Seven Trees

Delayed, I'll set my full presumption forth,
My agony, and the purpose wrought from it.—
Lovely the world you gave me for my home,
The emerald and the snow in season mixing
Their pleasant beauty, and the far lands hung
With misty seas slow heaving thru the morning
Their breasts of vert and azure, perfect in sleep,
And waking, tipt with chastened pearl! My God,
I loved that earth, love still; but something
Along my temples held my eyes wide, wide
As in strong madness, and I saw the nations
Rush armed together, until a beast rose up,
Fang-jawed, jowls oozing blood and stench along
His hairy breast, a monster risen up,
And man an evil smell beneath a mist
That, yellow seething, boiled along the world.—
My heart was packed in torn and rotted heat,
And sick beyond sick with terror. Oh, my God,
Then I remembered thy sweet waters, rose
And washed myself, considered thy untoiling
Lilies, and weeping all my tears until
The boiling tempest of my spirit lay
Cooled in their chalices, I swooned in prayer:
And in my swoon I passed, longing for thee,
Even to this place.

THE VOICE OF GOD

My son, your love has been
Of great spirit, and an understanding

The Garden of Seven Trees

Of high things has passed into your heart.
Yet, being but a part of me you well
Mistake the purpose of the whole; for, lo,
Death is the sweet food at the root of life,
And in me nothing lost. Those powers I lose
Upon each other labor but in me,
Working my being. Manifold immense
Disasters to your eye those gracious means
Thru which I gain my consummation.—Now
Move to the throne ground of Bright Space
The summoned Universes and the Powers,
There to work out a goodlier will of mine
For a broader cycle of eternity.
Mark now the body of doom riding her
Catafalque, and rising thence like May
In your own Southern mountains. In this hour
I shall redeem the Immensities. Behold!

At this the Suns banded into Universes swing in from Space, assembling mightily before the Mystic Mountain. The Abysses are left dark and hollow, sounding with raw thunder. Above the Garden the Seven Spirits hover, striking a saffron light from their wings; and in the Garden the flocks trample about in awful agitation. A change begins to work upon the Seven Trees, and here and there a fountain of blackness spurts out over the Garden from the walling space around.

The Garden of Seven Trees

MAN

Seeking for Beauty I find but Truth. I gaze
Too long upon the rose, the Universes
Cramp, and mighty symbolisms strike
Broadly across the infinite. The face
Of God for which I seek becomes a voice
Speaking a common language, and the worlds
Are summoned as autumn leaves; as winter fruits
The Universes pile before the Mount.
The Spaces are left dark to the marching feet
Of abyssmal thunders; the black ocean shakes
Her flood beyond her shores; and my own world
Remaining only in the Spaces, gleams
With arrowy jet, with shafted ebony tipped
Dark diamond.

GOLDEN SHEPHERD

Our flocks are struck by the
Black fountains.

SILVER SHEPHERD

Let us among them, still
To be watching in the midst of the Garden.

MAN

Pray you with me detain yourselves
In love, and let us lay our lips together
Upon the breast of this great moment, and
Feed from the source magnificent of life.

The Garden of Seven Trees

GOLDEN SHEPHERD

We go to the deeps of the Garden. He who feeds
Upon the truth of mystery, must feed
Alone.

SILVER SHEPHERD

We go to the deeps of the Garden. If there come
A moment past the might of sufferance,
And you would join us, join us as you may,
In prayer among the loveliness of one
Eternity a moment wrecked, and cast
Like Pity underneath the winds of Space.

(They go.)

MAN

Like mighty captives stride the worlds along,
Their naked loveliness like the breasts of men
Blushing with power; and hugely interlocked
Are they, in heavy armies bound by chains
Circling in thick coils of power. Now rushes down,
Swift from the unknown reaches, a great wind,
A cough of chaos storming full of fire;
Now hurl the Universes breast to breast
Their leagued ranks, their heavy bulks up-tossed
Among the tempests: huge their battle rage!
Some blackened lie rough-clashing in their chains,
Like sea-sunk skeletons of galley slaves
When thunders moil the oceans deeply down;
And others rear like maddened mountains blowing

The Garden of Seven Trees

Steep wrath to heaven, till their bulks consumed
Collapse with mighty clapping of their sides.—
And there the flocks with eyes hot carbuncle
Break from the weeping Shepherds, and with
flanks

Striking their silver and gold into red fury,
Unlike the things they were, rush far beyond
The Garden, down the Bright Field, leaping
On fire-spitting hoofs until they hurl themselves
Into the wilder flame. On high there sweep,
Beyond the great trees rising, the Seven Spirits
Screaming an iron wail, fearfully charging
Upward into the blackness. Inrushing chill
Breaks black and green upon the trampled flowers
Blue-cut by hoofs, like flesh all numb and dead.
The great trees shake like piles of ashy ice
Upbuilt by ocean tides, and struck again
Until their moaning heights sink into foam.—
Oh, God, is this Thy silence? Shall I, too, go
Into the deeps of the Garden, mix myself
With the most lovely thing that ruin ever
Blasted? Immensities redeemed—the greater
Comes—but beauty lies so near and low!
Yet shall I wait the forming of new suns
In splendor swinging highly, and all Space
Fair blooming with these roses and these lilies;
And I shall wrestle thru a greater chaos
To a greater doom than this. Amen! Amen!

SONNET

Out of the drifting years there comes to me
A slow sad seriousness of mind and heart,
Child-wondering, and musing over art,
Too tender, most. Some full eternity
Falls closely round, and yet I can not free
Its awful shapes, nor know God's mind, nor know
The form of Love, that I may look and go,
Saying with faith, "This thing is Beauty—see!"

Even such my doubting. Yet upon my soul
Is struck a stern commandment. A great voice
Is on the hills, a summons on the deep.
Be it then so that I search out the goal
That's set for me, not fearful of the choice
Or failing ever That good will to keep.

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